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**Statement on behalf of South Africa in the Sixth Committee of the  
General Assembly of the United Nations under agenda item 109  
“Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism”**

7 October 2019

Mr Chairman

Thank you for giving me the floor. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of South African delegation.

Allow me to join others in congratulating you on your election as Chair of the Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support throughout the work of the Committee.

South Africa associates itself with the statements made earlier on behalf of the African Group and the Non-aligned Movement.

We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the topic we are considering today: “measures to eliminate international terrorism”.

Mr Chairman

In the face of the unfortunate reality of how prevalent and common terrorism has become, our work on this topic becomes increasingly important and urgent. South Africa reiterates its strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This includes all acts, methods and practices of terrorism engaged in for whatever cause or motive. There can be no justification for terrorism whatsoever.

Also, on the African continent, the African Union, in rejecting all forms of terrorism, has resolved in its *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* to build a region which shall be free from armed conflict, terrorism, extremism and intolerance.

While much is being done to counter terrorism at the international, regional, subregional, bilateral and national levels, including in terms of law enforcement, mutual legal assistance and extradition, it has become critically important and urgent to conclude a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism. We therefore welcome the work of the *ad hoc*

committee tasked with drafting the convention. In light of the prevalence of terrorism today and the evolution and complexity of the threat, it has become urgent to reach agreement on the outstanding issues in the negotiations on the convention. We are therefore ready to work constructively with Member States in the working group and we hope that we can make the necessary progress during this session towards finalising the convention.

We encourage other Member States to also approach the work of the working group with the same spirit of constructiveness and compromise, with the view to achieving consensus on issues where possible, and to enhance mutual understanding on issues around which it may not be possible at this stage to agree.

We believe that in order for the convention to be effective in eliminating international terrorism, it should not conflate the issue of terrorism with peoples' legitimate aspirations for self-determination and struggles against colonial domination in a manner that is not in accordance with international law. A comprehensive convention on international terrorism should therefore in no way deny people their right to self-determination.

Equally important for the convention, as well as all other initiatives aimed at countering terrorism, remains respect for human rights, particularly the right to life, the right not to be arbitrarily deprived of freedom without just cause, the right not to be detained without trial, not to be tortured, not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner, the right of access to courts, as well as universally accepted rights of arrested, detained and accused persons.

We also believe that the rights of victims of terrorism should equally find expression in our work on this topic and should form an integral part of a comprehensive convention.

In order to be effective, the comprehensive convention should also address the underlying conditions that lead to terrorism. Its causes and manifestations are varied and should be taken into account when elaborating counter-measures. As such, counter-measures must always be in accordance with international law and should not result in marginalisation of individuals and groups and the subsequent sense of alienation that exacerbates extremism, which often leads to further recruitment of terrorists.

In conclusion, Mr Chairman

We wish to stress the importance of support and capacity-building to developing countries at their request, to implement global initiatives to combat terrorism. Developing countries are often vulnerable to terrorist attacks, while

also being least resourced to address terrorism, both in terms of prevention and prosecution of perpetrators of terrorism acts.

I thank you for your attention.