

**Remarks at the 74th General Assembly Sixth Committee**  
**Agenda Item 109: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism**  
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Thank you, Chair.

The United States reiterates its firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism – by whomever committed – are criminal, inhumane and unjustifiable, regardless of motivation. The United States is committed to using all of our tools to end terrorism, including through our efforts in the UN Security Council and with the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

As noted in the U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism (NSCT) released in October 2018, today's terrorist landscape is more fluid and complex than ever before. As highlighted in the NSCT, partnerships and the counterterrorism capacities of our partners will play a paramount role in the future of counterterrorism. We appreciate 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 (GCTS), relevant Security Council resolutions, and the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

The four pillars of the GCTS – including on addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and upholding human rights and the rule of law – remain as valid and relevant today as when the Strategy was adopted 13 years ago. The GCTS, and the General Assembly's biennial review resolutions, have given the Secretariat the guidance it needs to help Member States implement the Strategy. This includes preventing violent extremism (PVE) and supporting the Secretary-General's High Level Action Group to mainstream PVE across the UN system, implementation of the recommendations laid out in the UN PVE Plan of Action, as well as other efforts to help Member States adopt a whole-of-society approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism. As we noted last year, there are several serious flaws in recent review resolutions that the United States hopes will be rectified in next year's review.

The Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2396 in December 2017 and the following 2018 Addendum to the 2015 Madrid Guiding Principles remain cornerstones of the global counterterrorism framework and effective response to detect and counter terrorist travel.

A major success and addition to the global counterterrorism framework in the past year was the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2462 in March 2019 on countering the financing of terrorism. Resolution 2462 builds on obligations and other provisions in earlier resolutions designed to cut off the funding and other material support that allow terrorists and terrorist organizations to carry out their horrific crimes, regardless of whether financing is tied to a terrorist act.

Combined with intense military pressure from the U.S.-led Defeat-ISIS Coalition, Member States' implementation of Security Council resolutions 2178 and 2396 – aimed at countering terrorist travel – made a tremendous impact on the ground in Syria and Iraq, where all of the territory ISIS once held, and 7.7 million people once under ISIS' brutal rule, have been liberated.

The governments of The Republic of North Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, and Italy, among others, have acknowledged the repatriation of their citizens, and we understand that others have repatriated their citizens without public acknowledgment. With thousands of FTFs remaining in partner custody in Syria, and their families in camps, a concerted international effort towards repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation, and ultimately reintegration is essential not only for humanitarian reasons, but also to prevent the terrorist radicalization of another generation.

Member States' adoption of the 'whole-of-government' approach to countering terrorism continues to be an important aspect of the Security Council's work. Several resolutions underscore the importance of having all elements of government, including ministries of finance, justice, interior and security, education or youth, and information and communications, work together to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism.

The UN can play a meaningful role in addressing 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, or GCTF, and other multilateral bodies, civil society, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and regional and subregional organizations, that work to develop 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, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, and Hedayah.

We recognize the progress and important work being done within the UN Office of Counterterrorism to strengthen coordination of CT and CVE efforts throughout the UN through its Global Compact. The United States supports and will continue to support UNOCT efforts and continued leadership in making UN counter-terrorism more efficient and effective, and in

assisting in implementation of the GCTS across all four of its pillars. In this regard, and in line with the objectives of the joint CTED-UNOCT report submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2395, UNOCT activities and conferences should be based on CTED recommendations and draw from the lessons and trends identified from CTED country assessments.

We encourage continued close coordination between the UNOCT and CTED. CTED conducted an assessment visit to the United States in May this year and we encourage all countries to be responsive and open to CTED's requests for visits. Furthermore, efforts to counter terrorism that come at the expense of human rights and the rule of law are counterproductive and often feed the bankrupt narrative of terrorists. For these reasons, CTED and the UNOCT must pursue a balanced approach to implementing Security Council resolutions, the GCTS, and the recommendations of the UN PVE Plan of Action that recognizes the importance of preventing violent extremism, respecting human rights and the rule of law.

Domestically, we continue to engage and raise community awareness of violent extremism or radicalization to terrorism and recruitment dynamics, including racially and ethnically motivated terrorism—which can have international connections. We also provide community leaders tools and resources to work on prevention efforts. One continuing 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 continue to emphasize the importance of countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, while respecting human rights such as freedom of expression. We recognize that the Internet is but one tool used by terrorists and that technology is not the problem – terrorists are the problem. We continue to work to strengthen and expand our ongoing voluntary collaboration and partnerships with private technology companies to counter terrorism online by enforcing their terms of service. And while much remains to be done, we are seeing progress. However, while removing content online is important as part of a *short-term* strategy, it is only part of a *long-term, comprehensive* solution. As Member States continue to work together to implement the GCTS and resolutions such as resolution 2354 on countering terrorist narratives, we must continue to seek to build *long-term* resilience to terrorist messages through partnerships with youth to cultivate critical thinking skills and online public safety awareness through education. Positive narratives to counter terrorist propaganda will continue to be an important element of these efforts.

To help achieve this long-term and 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. In this fiscal year, the United States has contributed more than \$36 million to UN entities and INTERPOL, for development of research, capacity-building assistance, and training. We once again encourage

other Member States to share the burden of helping the UN implement the GCTS, both by helping it improve its own work and its efforts to assist Member States.

We should also continue to partner with local communities and key civil society organizations. We also look forward to the implementation plan from UNOCT regarding the creation of its civil society unit announced in last year's High-Level Counterterrorism Conference. Civil society organizations are among the most effective in countering terrorist lies.

Turning to treaty developments, we again 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. These instruments are only effective, however, if they are widely ratified and implemented. In this regard, we fully support efforts to promote ratification and implementation of these instruments. As the United States has emphasized since its negotiation in 2014, the United States does not consider the 2014 Montreal Protocol to the Tokyo Convention to be one of these universal instruments, and does not intend to become party to it, in light of serious textual deficiencies that are counter-productive to law enforcement efforts.

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, Chair.