

Statement by Turkey at the Sixth Committee for the 76th Session of the General Assembly under agenda item 111: “Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism” (5 October 2021)

Madame Chair,

Let me join other delegations in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election. You all have the Turkish Mission’s trust and I assure you of my delegation’s full cooperation.

Terrorism continues to be one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. It hinders sustainable development and well-being of societies.

It is not only a grave violation of human rights but also a factor that has negative impacts on fulfilment of fundamental rights and freedoms.

All acts of terrorism are unjustified regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomever committed.

In this respect, we strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and pay respect to the memories of all the victims of terrorism.

Terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group. Any attempt to establish such affiliations would only play into the hands of groups and individuals who espouse violence.

Madame Chair,

Turkey has been at the forefront of countering terrorist organizations with a broad spectrum of ideologies, be it DAESH, Al-Qaida, PKK/YPG or FETÖ for years. These groups and others have been operating across national borders, running training camps, acquiring financial resources, operating media outlets to disseminate their propaganda and glorify their vicious acts abroad. Regretfully, some perpetrators of terrorist attacks, their accomplices and financiers have been able to escape justice and travel freely.

Against this backdrop, the crucial lesson is that we cannot succeed in our counter-terrorism efforts in the absence of international cooperation.

There should be increased cooperation between states on the basis of the “extradite or prosecute” principle, in order to deny safe haven to terrorists.

No discrimination between terrorist organizations should be made. Fighting against one terrorist organization while relying upon support from other leads to serious flaws in overall countering terrorism efforts.

While attaching utmost importance and value to regional and cross-regional international cooperation mechanisms we see the UN as the main platform for promoting a collective and coherent response against terrorism.

With this in mind, and with reference to emerging currents and trends in terrorism, we actively participated in further development of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Despite some serious shortcomings we welcome the adoption of the 7th review of the Strategy by consensus. We will continue to support the implementation of the Strategy's "four pillars" in the period ahead

Madame Chair,

The FTFs still pose an enduring threat.

They have direct implications for Turkey's security and for the countries beyond our borders. For that reason, bilaterally and in every multilateral fora, including but not limited to the UN and Global Coalition Against Daesh, we have been advocating the view that temporary and legally unsound fixes on preventing FTF returns will not resolve this daunting problem.

The responsibility of so-called detention of FTFs should not be left to other terrorist groups. Member states should avoid actions that would, even though implicitly and inadvertently, provide legitimacy the other terrorist organizations on the ground.

FTFs in inadequate and illegitimate detention facilities and their associated family members living in overburdened camps pose a serious security threat and a humanitarian challenge.

In this framework, we believe that repatriation of FTFs by the source countries and their prosecution, rehabilitation, reintegration, as appropriate, is of key importance.

We commend the countries that have undertaken repatriations and urge the others to take back their own nationals.

The "Global Framework" developed by UNOCT in close cooperation with UNICEF and other relevant UN entities, including OHCHR, which was officially launched last week, deserves our praise. We believe it provides a clear guidance as to how the UN system will work to build capacity of member states that have repatriated, or are committed to repatriating, their nationals from camps in Syria and Iraq.

With regards to the issue of countering the flow FTF's to conflict zones, Turkey has started taking preventive measures even before the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 2178 (2014). We continue to prevent the flow of FTFs and implements strict restrictions on the entry of individuals suspected of holding affiliation with terrorist organizations. In accordance with the UNSCR 2178, individuals suspected to have links to terrorist outfits who enter Turkish territory by illegal means are transferred to Deportation Centers to be processed for deportation. Moreover, the Risk Analysis Groups located in various airports and bus terminals play a critical role in our prevention efforts.

Madame Chair,

Countering financing of terrorism and anti-money laundering efforts are also at the center of our approach to effectively address terrorism in all its aspects. With this understanding, as a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Turkey regularly reviews its legislation in line with the FATF recommendations and adapts its administrative measures accordingly

Also, the nexus between organized crime and terrorism cannot be overlooked. The smuggling of narcotics, as well as human and migrant trafficking, among other illegal activities, constitute significant sources of revenue for terrorist groups. Prevention of such transnational crimes requires concerted action. To this end, Turkey works closely bilaterally with other countries and actively contributes to the collective efforts within regional and international fora. In this respect, we value the work of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Madame Chair,

We are fully aware of the importance of upholding human rights while countering terrorism and to ensure that all measures taken are consistent with our relevant international obligations.

Addressing the root causes of terrorism by preventing violent extremism, in all its forms and manifestations, also needs to remain a priority.

We look forward to working closely with Member States on measures to eliminate terrorism.

We also hope that progress will be achieved on the negotiations aimed at concluding the Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism.

Madame Chair,

Before I conclude, I would like to underline that we categorically reject the allegation against Turkey in paragraph 8 of the report of the Secretary General (A/76/201).

Thank you.