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**Statement by
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Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia
to the United Nations**

**On behalf of
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

Sixth Committee

**Agenda Item 109
Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism**

**78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York, 2 October 2023**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

1. It is my honor to make a statement on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), at this important session of the 6th Committee on **"Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism."**
2. Allow me to start by congratulating you on assuming leadership of the Sixth Committee. I am confident that you will steer the Committee towards good accomplishment.
3. On the topic of our deliberation, ASEAN highly appreciates the Secretary-General's report on the "Activities of the United Nations System in Implementing the **Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** (GCTS) as contained in document A/77/718 dated 2 February 2023. We are encouraged by the progress made through this strategy and firmly support its full implementation.
4. ASEAN also commends the successful organization of the Counter-Terrorism Week, in New York from 19 to 23 June 2023, which include the convening of the High-Level Conference of the Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies on the overarching theme of "**Addressing Terrorism through Reinvigorated Multilateralism and Institutional Cooperation**". There is no doubt that the extensive exchange of views and sharing of experiences among relevant stakeholders during the week has significantly contributed to the efforts in narrowing the space for terrorism and violent extremism.
5. On a parallel note, ASEAN appreciates and commends the work of the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), who have been actively providing technical support to Member States.
6. ASEAN welcomes the adoption of the United Nations resolution on the 8th Review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We view it as a unique global instrument to further enhance national, regional, and international counter-terrorism efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

7. ASEAN fully recognizes the importance collective efforts in addressing the intricate issues of terrorism and violent extremism. Therefore, within our region, we work under the guidance of the **ASEAN Plan of Action to**

Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2018-2025), which emphasizes on the application of a comprehensive and evidence-based approach in combating and curtailing the growth of radicalization and violent extremism.

8. Furthermore, we have the **ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism** and the **ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism**, ratified by all ten ASEAN Member States to serve as a framework for forging collaboration and coordination not only among ASEAN sectoral bodies, but also between ASEAN and other relevant regional and international entities. Even amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our region's effort to tackle the issues at feed terrorism and violent extremism, continued unabated, involving activities across various sectors such as border control, combating human trafficking and addressing illicit drug smuggling.
9. In recognizing the significant threat to global peace, security and socio-economic development posed by international terrorism, ASEAN stands firm in its support for international efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, through the following measures:
 - (1) **Strengthening International Cooperation:** ASEAN calls for enhanced international cooperation, information sharing, and coordination among member states and relevant international organizations. We must work together to identify and track terrorist networks, disrupt their financing, and bring their members to justice.
 - (2) **Addressing Root Causes:** To eliminate the breeding grounds of terrorism, it is vital to address the root causes, including poverty, social exclusion, and the lack of education. As a long-term preventive strategy, ASEAN encourages member states to invest in sustainable development, social inclusion, and education.
 - (3) **Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law:** ASEAN reaffirms the importance of respecting human rights and the rule of law in counter-terrorism efforts. We should ensure that counter-terrorism measures do not lead to human rights abuses or the stigmatization of any particular group.
 - (4) **Capacity Building:** ASEAN is committed to building the capacity of member states to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism effectively.

We encourage technical assistance and capacity-building programs to strengthen national counter-terrorism efforts.

- (5) **Countering Radicalization:** Preventing the radicalization of individuals is crucial. ASEAN supports community-based programs, religious dialogue, and educational initiatives to counter extremist ideologies.
- (6) **Protection of Soft Targets:** In an interconnected world, soft targets such as public spaces and critical infrastructure are vulnerable to terrorist attacks. ASEAN calls for strengthened cooperation to protect soft targets and enhance public safety.
- (7) **Cybersecurity:** ASEAN emphasizes the importance of a robust cybersecurity measure to prevent terrorist organizations from exploiting the digital platform for recruitment and communication.

Mr. Chairman,

- 10. Terrorist acts are never acceptable under any circumstances. In this context, ASEAN remains committed to actively engage in the global fight against the increasing menace of terrorism. We will continue to seek innovative ways to collaborate on counter-terrorism efforts and enhance our cross-sectoral cooperation in countering terrorism with our partners. We want to re-emphasize that terrorism should never be linked to any particular race, religion, nationality, or ethnicity.
- 11. Efforts to combat terrorism should strictly adhere to the United Nations Charter and uphold established international humanitarian and human rights laws. Additionally, it is crucial to respect the principles of state independence, sovereign equality, and non-interference in domestic affairs. These principles are essential for ensuring a robust global response to counter-terrorism.

I thank you for your attention.