

Statement of the United Arab Emirates

Delivered by Tahreer Al Marzooqi, Third Secretary

before the Sixth (Legal) Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on the item "Measures to eliminate international terrorism"

78th Session, New York, 03 October 2023

Chairperson,

I congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your election and on your assumption of the chair of the Committee. I assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support throughout the work of the Committee.

The UAE aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Chairperson,

Despite the progress achieved by the international community in countering the threat of terrorism, terrorist groups continue to adapt their methods and change their strategies to achieve their goals, threatening international peace and security. We are particularly concerned about the continued ability of terrorist groups to take advantage of conflicts, deteriorating economic conditions, and security vacuums in ungoverned spaces, to assert their control and advance their agenda. Of equal concern is the exploitation of Islamophobic acts, including the burning of the Holy Qur'an, for the purposes of recruitment and calling for terrorist attacks.

In this regard, I would like to focus on the following important issues:

First, the UAE stresses the need to continue strengthening national and international legal frameworks to combat terrorism, and ensure member states' compliance to their obligations in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions. The UAE continues to update and enact domestic laws to counter-terrorism and criminalize terrorist actions. In addition, the UAE joined more than 15 regional and international conventions on combating terrorism.

It is time to revitalize and accelerate our work on finalizing a comprehensive convention against international terrorism. Despite existing international agreements and resolutions to address the growing threats of terrorism, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, eradicating this scourge requires a comprehensive international treaty to strengthen the international legal framework, and address existing gaps and inconsistencies. We stand ready to work with all interested delegations to reinvigorate negotiations and resolve outstanding issues in this regard.

Second: Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization, or ethnic group.

This is why the UAE has been emphasizing the need to avoid using names under religious slogans in reference to terrorist groups, in particular Da'esh. Terrorist groups are deliberately using these designations to exploit religion to recruit fighters and supporters. Also, when the United Nations and its Member States use the designation "Islamic State", they compromise the fact that there is nothing Islamic about terrorism.

Third, it is important to prevent and counter the increasing use of new technologies for terrorist purposes.

This includes the use of artificial intelligence, drones, cryptocurrencies, social media and other digital platforms which have become one of the most important tools that terrorist groups seek to possess and use in achieving their dangerous goals. In this context, we call for extensive cooperation between Member States, relevant UN bodies and the private sector to agree on a common collective approach to confront these threats, including through sharing expertise, experiences, capacity building and strengthening legal frameworks, without limiting the ability to innovate.

Fourth, we must work together to build our legal, operational and technological capacities to prevent terrorist groups, including Daesh, from using sexual and gender-based violence as a strategic objective and tactic

to humiliate, intimidate, and control populations. Therefore, we must strengthen our cooperation and coordination efforts, including through relevant UN bodies, to ensure that no terrorist group is allowed to commit these atrocities with impunity, and to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of these crimes within our respective jurisdictions in accordance with our obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Finally, preventing extremism by actively promoting tolerance and mutual understanding is essential to ensure successful efforts in countering terrorism.

Violence prevention remains the best way to protect innocent people. Therefore, prevention measures should focus on building peaceful and resilient societies through a comprehensive whole-of-governmental and whole-of-society approach. This requires investing in education, economic development, and the promotion of interfaith and intercultural dialogue, in addition to the empowerment of women and youth.

In this regard, the UAE stresses the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 2686 on "Tolerance and international peace and security", which calls for a comprehensive approach in promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence to address the causes of conflicts. The resolution also encourages stakeholders, including religious and community leaders, the media, and social media platforms, to promote tolerance and address hate speech and extremism.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, the UAE affirms that it will continue its efforts to strengthen the United Nations Counter-Terrorism system, including through its work in this committee, its position as Chairperson of the Counter-Terrorism Committee this year, and in other international forums.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.