



## United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee: Plenary debate on measures to eliminate international terrorism

2 October 2024

### Statement by Ms Laura McIlhenny, First Secretary and Legal Adviser, Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations

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Thank you, Chair.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Canada and New Zealand and my own country, Australia.

As this is the first time we are taking the floor during this session of the Committee, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate both you Chair, and each member of the Bureau, for your appointments. CANZ assures you all our full support.

As we turn to focus on the item for discussion today, I will first and foremost reaffirm the absolute condemnation of the CANZ countries of terrorism and violent extremism, wherever it takes place and in all its manifestations.

We provided last year's statement on the eve of the horrific October 7 terrorist attacks. Since then, a lot has changed in the world and in the threats we collectively face.



Today, we operate in a complex, volatile and uncertain environment. Events such as the October 7 attacks, the ensuing conflict in Gaza escalation of violence in Lebanon, and other global conflicts and crises have had a profound and lasting impact on our nations and our societies.

The continued entrenchment of terrorist groups in Western Africa, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa is a source of concern not just for Africa, but for the world. Terrorism is a global problem that seeks to strike at the heart of our communities.

As terrorist groups continue to adapt their tactics to the evolving world, and to exploit new methods and technologies to achieve their ends, CANZ countries remain committed to using global solutions to address this pernicious threat to international peace and security, and to the international rules-based order on which we rely.

We recognize that effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are not conflicting goals, but complementary and mutually reinforcing. Moreover, terrorism will not be defeated by military force, law enforcement measures, or intelligence operations alone.

We cannot address terrorism and violent extremism on our own or in isolation. It is by working together, with our regional and international



partners, that we can better collectively identify, reduce and mitigate drivers of extremism and terrorism. Understanding the differentiated and rapidly evolving drivers of terrorism and violent extremism enables focused measures aimed at effectively suppressing the threat of terrorism globally.

CANZ countries reaffirm the obligations and commitments we have made under international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, in considering the measures that we take to combat terrorism.

We urge all states to do the same, and to make use of the existing institutions of the United Nations, including those established on the basis of the Security Council's resolutions relating to the prevention and eradication of terrorism.

CANZ believes that each of the Security Council's resolutions is an essential component of a comprehensive approach to addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. These include cooperative efforts on border control, information-sharing, investigating of terrorist acts, applying of sanctions, and improving humanitarian access. These resolutions both deter and prevent terrorist acts.

In addition to government action at all levels, we reiterate the importance of engaging all elements of society in the work to counter violent extremism.



We laud in particular the critical work of civil society, including community-based civil society, grassroots organizations, the private sector, academia, think tanks, media, youth, women, and cultural, educational, and religious leaders.

We warn against the dangers of limiting the space for civil society and broad discussion on important issues. Efforts to counter division and disharmony within a society are weakened without broad and inclusive participation. They must be reflective of local needs, and sensitive to differences, including on the basis of gender and background.

CANZ continues to support the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Compact. The active inclusion of civil society in the process for the 8th review of the GCTS was a valuable and important step, and one that we will continue to support heading into the 9th review in 2026.

The international community also has a responsibility to aid the victims of terrorism. CANZ countries support the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism. We are proud to give this group voice on the international stage, to empower survivors to tell their stories, and to share best practices and lessons learned in focusing on the rights and needs of victims and survivors.



We will continue to work closely with the international community – bilaterally, regionally and globally - to counter violent extremism and international terrorism in all its forms.

Thank you