



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

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At the Sixth Committee

On the Agenda item 110:

“Measures to eliminate international terrorism”

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Mr / Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina* and Georgia, as well as Andorra, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

[As this is our first statement in the Sixth Committee this year, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you and the Bureau on your appointments. We look forward to working with you.]

Despite our collective international efforts, the threat from terrorism and violent extremism continues to evolve, becoming increasingly dynamic and complex. Multiple crises worldwide and growing instability amplify this menace, particularly on the African continent but also in many other regions. While

** North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

politically motivated violent extremism – including from far-right and far-left groups – and the potential misuse of new technologies for terrorist purposes are on the rise, Al-Qaida, ISIL (Da’esh), and their affiliates remain the most prominent threats. The resurgence of ISIL-K, evidenced by its ability to project threats into Europe and its attacks in Russia, Iran, and Central Asia, underscores the renewed global danger posed by ISIL.

In response to these challenges, the European Union and its Member States have strengthened our robust strategic and legislative framework to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism. Building upon the four pillars of our Counter-Terrorism Agenda – Anticipate, Prevent, Protect, and Respond – we have bolstered both our internal and external efforts.

Over the past four years, the EU has successfully implemented and delivered its 2020 Counter-Terrorism Agenda. These efforts have had a positive impact on countering the preparation, planning and execution of terrorist attacks, while ensuring timely and adequate responses. The dynamic developments in terrorist methodologies and motivations, as well as the increasing prominence of the external dimension for internal security, necessitate a more comprehensive

approach. As such, a new EU Agenda for Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism is being developed to provide a strategic framework for the years to come.

As part of the implementation of our current Counter-Terrorism Agenda, the European Commission has launched several initiatives to strengthen security, including a EUR 30 million call for proposals to enhance the security of public spaces, focussing on places of worship of all faiths, CBRN threats, firearms trafficking, explosive detection, and non-cooperative drones. In response to recent antisemitic incidents following the unprecedented terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel in October 2023, the call places particular emphasis on the protection of Jewish places of worship. The Commission has also established a Counter-Terrorism Financial Investigators Network, enhancing the EU's capacity to combat the financing of terrorism. Furthermore, the EU Knowledge Hub on the Prevention of Radicalisation, launched earlier this year, is a flagship initiative facilitating collaboration among policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, offering tangible outcomes such as research, training and policy recommendations.

Recognising that international cooperation is a main priority of our counter-terrorism policy, let me briefly turn to our external efforts. As co-chair of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum alongside Egypt, the EU – as well as its Member States – actively contribute to fostering multilateral cooperation. Together with our co-chair, our priorities continue to be mainstreaming gender, including promoting the role of women in counter-terrorism, and focusing geographically on Africa. At the 14th GCTF Ministerial Meeting in New York just last week, we strengthened the Forum’s strategic partnership with the African Union. The meeting renewed the clear commitment to deliver civilian counter-terrorism capacity to African states in areas such as border security, countering the financing of terrorism and propaganda, and better aligning counter-terrorism priorities – all while reaffirming the importance of civil society engagement and adherence to human rights and international law.

We further reiterate our commitment to the continued and balanced implementation of all four Pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In particular, we look forward to results-based reporting by UNOCT and other UN counter-terrorism entities.

Allow me to highlight four key points of paramount importance to the work of this Committee:

First, any measures taken to prevent and counter terrorism must strictly comply with the rule of law and all obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law. Counter-terrorism efforts must never serve as a pretext for human rights violations. On the contrary, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is the cornerstone of sustainable counter-terrorism strategies, enhancing their legitimacy and effectiveness. These principles are reaffirmed in the Pact for the Future, which underscores respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as the essential foundation of all counter-terrorism efforts.

Second, safeguarding civic space is essential. We must protect civil society representatives and human rights defenders, as meaningful partnerships with civil society are crucial to effectively addressing the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism. The full, equal, and meaningful participation and leadership of women are indispensable in these efforts. We also recognize the importance

of protecting and rehabilitating all victims of terrorism, viewing them as key agents in preventing further terrorist acts. Furthermore, we note that journalism is fundamental for sustainable development, human rights protection and democratic consolidation.

Third, we must protect the humanitarian space. The adoption of Security Council Resolution 2664 in December 2022 introduced a humanitarian carve-out from UN sanctions regimes, which has facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need in situations where sanctions apply. Resolution 2664 will cease to apply to the ISIL/Al-Qaida regime on 9 December 2024, unless the Security Council decides to extend its application to that regime.

Fourth, we deplore the increasing politicization of the fight against terrorism, including polarization in international fora. The European Union and its Member States strongly believe in the rules-based international order. We are mindful of the Pact for the Future, which considers revitalizing the negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, and we remain committed to making progress in these discussions. Establishing a common legal framework at the international level would inherently strengthen global

cooperation. The EU serves as a prime example: having established a clear legal framework – including a unified definition of terrorism in the EU Directive on Combating Terrorism, adopted in 2017 – has allowed for harmonised criminalisation across all our Member States and has strengthened cooperation between them. Additional inspiration for the Working Group could be drawn from the discussions in the Council of Europe, which has reached provisional agreement at the technical level on a pan-European definition of terrorism. At the international level, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, ratified by almost all UN Member States, also provides helpful guidance. We would further underline that any definition should contain a safeguards clause to ensure the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Given the global nature of the threat, it is crucial that the international community speaks with one voice. In this context, respect for international law, including human rights law, has a direct and practical impact on international law enforcement cooperation, underpinning our efforts to hold perpetrators accountable and bring justice to victims.

In conclusion, **Mr / Madam Chair**, the European Union and its Member States remain steadfast in our commitment to multilateralism and to supporting global

efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism, in a manner compliant with international law. We stand ready to work collaboratively with all partners to strengthen our collective security and uphold the values that unite us.

I thank you.