



**Statement on behalf of
the Republic of South Africa**

by

**Ms Keke Mantsho Annastacia Motsepe
Counsellor: Legal
Permanent Mission of the Republic of South
Africa to the United Nations**

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Agenda item 110

“Measures to eliminate international terrorism”

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Chairperson,

At the outset, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau for your well-deserved election. I assure you of South Africa's and my own personal support. I also wish to express gratitude to the outgoing Bureau which has successfully and excellently steered our meetings in the previous session.

South Africa aligns itself with the statements delivered by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Uganda on behalf of the African Group.

Chairperson,

My delegation wishes to extend its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report regarding the important agenda item on measures to eliminate international terrorism, as well as to those Governments and international organisations that provided submissions which allows for greater insight into the measures taken on the prevention and suppression of international terrorism.

Terrorism remains a serious threat to international peace and security, human rights, and to humanitarian efforts of the international community. Terrorism targets the general population and is calculated to induce fear in civilians - it cannot be justified under any circumstances. Notwithstanding, initiatives aimed at countering terrorism must also ensure respect for human rights of the perpetrator, particularly the right to life, as well as universally accepted rights of arrested, detained and accused persons.

Chairperson,

Terrorist activities are ever-changing and constantly developing, and responding thereto requires a dynamic approach, including undertaking ongoing assessments of vulnerabilities and threats. The rising threat of cyberterrorism and the use of emerging technologies by terrorist groups requires particular focus of the international community. International cooperation in ensuring the safe use of cyberspace, responsible behaviour in the digital realm and the adoption of norms to prevent

cyberterrorism is critical. In this regard, South Africa has recently embarked upon comprehensive consideration of legal, institutional and operational measures to counter terror financing. The aim of the exercise is to ensure that the country's response to terrorism and terror attacks is forward looking and can counter all forms of terrorist threats before they manifest.

South Africa remains resolute in its commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. However, no country can address this challenging and complex threat on its own. In this regard it is crucial that States cooperate with one another, both on the regional and international level. The cross-border nature of terrorism further underscores the critical role that international cooperation plays in combating terrorism.

South Africa together with BRICS countries have sought to deepen counter-terrorism cooperation through the establishment of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group and its five Subgroups based upon the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan. The group advocates for stronger global measures to block the financing of terrorist organizations, with particular focus on money laundering, illicit financial flows, cyber-based methods of financing, use of cryptocurrencies and dark web resources for terrorist purposes.

Chairperson,

Terrorism should be unequivocally condemned. Similarly, condemnation should also be addressed to the practice of some nations using terrorism as a tool for political gains. In this regard, South Africa expresses its deep concern at the attempts to label UNRWA as a terrorist organisation.

The international community should avoid the double standards in countering terrorism, where certain groups are labelled terrorists by some and freedom fighters by others. South Africa underscores that acts committed during the course of an armed conflict, and which are not in contravention of international humanitarian law must not be cast as terrorist activity.

Terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any particular religion, culture, or ethnic group. This is a crucial aspect in addressing the scourge of terrorism given the diverse religious and cultural backgrounds of the member states. We emphasise the need for a multilateral, cooperative, and non-discriminatory approach to tackling one of the most pressing global threats. In order to further strengthen cooperation, it is imperative that all States ratify and accede to the various international and regional instruments relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism.

Chairperson,

Whilst extensive efforts have been undertaken and continue to be made to counter terrorism at the international, regional, subregional, bilateral and national levels, including in terms of law enforcement, mutual legal assistance and extradition, South Africa reiterates that a comprehensive convention will go a long way to further consolidating efforts to combat terrorism.

In conclusion, South Africa ardently supports the finalisation of a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism. We note with concern that this matter has been on the agenda of the Sixth Committee for over a decade and we encourage States to redouble all efforts to ensure that we can find consensus, particularly in relation to a definition of terrorism, which will aid in cooperation and coordinating efforts to combat terrorism.

I thank you.