



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

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COUNSELLOR**

**To the
Sixth Committee of the
United Nations General Assembly**

**“Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism”
Agenda Item 110**

**Seventy-Ninth Session
3rd October 2024**

(Please check against delivery)

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Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

1. The Sierra Leone delegation congratulates you, Chair, on your election to steer the work of the Sixth Committee for this 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). We also congratulate the Bureau members on their respective elections and excellent work. Chair, your extensive diplomatic experience will undoubtedly lead our work to a successful and profitable conclusion during this session. I assure you and the Bureau of my delegation's total cooperation.
2. The Sierra Leone delegation aligns this statement with the earlier statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Uganda on behalf of the African Group, the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the representative of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.
3. We thank the Secretary-General for his report A/79/99 issued under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 50/53, as read together with Assembly resolution 78/115, and have duly taken note of the contents therein. We commend Member States and international organizations that responded to the Secretary-General's request.

Chair,

4. Sierra Leone reiterates her unequivocal and strong condemnation of all acts, methods, and practices of terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomsoever committed. We recall paragraph 4 of GA Resolution A/RES/78/115 adopted on December 7, 2023, on “Measures to eliminate international terrorism,” which *“reiterates that criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstances unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them.”*
5. In the year under review, Sierra Leone faced unprecedented domestic terrorism on November 26, 2023, which was subsequently judicially pronounced as an attempted coup d'état, when attacks on military barracks and correctional facilities left 21 dead, including 14 soldiers. Similar to the August 10, 2022, insurrection, this was a well-planned and financed attempt to undermine the peace, stability, and the democratically elected government.
6. As for the August 10, 2022, insurrection, a Special Investigations confirmed **“the use of dangerous weapons, including machetes,**

guns, and sticks against security personnel, to the point of murdering six of them in cold blood, injuring another who later died, and about twenty-one civilians losing their lives...” The Report further notes, regrettably, that the international community, particularly the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Assembly, was sending conflicting messages that inflamed and aggravated the situation, which protesters used to justify their action to remove the legitimate government.

Chair,

7. No justification can be found for acts of terrorism. In this regard, we welcome the 8th Review of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We call for more openness in negotiation to reach a consensus on essential points in the 9th Review, which will be held in 2026, coinciding with the 20th Anniversary of launching the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
8. On our part, the newly enacted laws on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Central Intelligence and Security Agency, and Cybersecurity have better-equipped state institutions to detect, investigate, and prosecute terrorist acts.
9. We also recently launched the National Security Policy and Strategy (NSPS) in August this year, which aims to safeguard the country and its

people and address evolving security challenges. The NSPS, supported by national and international institutions, including the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations, is a significant step in efforts to modernize our approach to national security.

10. Besides national efforts, regional cooperation is crucial in countering terrorism. In July, the Mano River Union (MRU) Initiative was launched to enhance collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia in combating terrorism and violent extremism. This aligns with the political declaration and regional action plan against terrorism adopted by the ECOWAS Authority, which shows progress and encourages further cooperation.
11. We commend the Office of Counter-Terrorism for providing technical assistance to member states and facilitating regional cooperation. We urge continued logistical, financial, technical, and technological support for regional initiatives mainly to implement the decisions in the Communique of the Sixty-Fifth Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS held on 7th July 2024. This support is necessary to fully operationalise the multinational joint task forces of the Accra Initiative and Lake Chad Basin in response to rapidly evolving and sophisticated activities of terrorist groups and criminal organisations in West Africa and the Sahel.

Chair,

12. This brings me to the issue of the Sahel. The delegation of Sierra Leone continues to express deep concerns about the regrettable proliferated presence of terrorist groups in the Sahel and parts of the West African sub-region and the cowardly acts of terrorism. In this year's debate, Sierra Leone's delegation will highlight the following points:
13. Firstly, the root causes of terrorism need to be addressed to prevent further entrenchment and spread. Despite facing leadership and financial setbacks, Da'esh and its affiliates still pose a threat through established cells and facilitation networks, including in northwest Nigeria through the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and support for Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS). Addressing these issues is crucial to preventing future terrorist attacks.
14. Sierra Leone notes with grave concern that the Secretary-General's 19th Report on the Threats Posed by Da'esh to International Peace and Security indicates that "The situation in West Africa and the Sahel has not changed since the previous report" and strongly urges proactive, urgent, and decisive action, which, in tandem with militarized responses, addresses the conditions conducive to the recruitment and radicalization of the region's youth.

15. Terrorists are created in environments of social exclusion, inequality, and the relegation of human rights. Environments with limited opportunities for education and economic empowerment deprive a significant size of the population, like the youth, of a dignified life and are susceptible to instability, with women and girls usually affected the most. This is often exacerbated by climate change and natural disasters, leading to deficiencies in development, as evidenced by less than 20% of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) achievement.

16. Recalling the Arria-formula meeting convened in June this year on “Combating the Rise of Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa and the Sahel,” convened by Sierra Leone and co-sponsored by the other A3 plus members of the UN Security Council, namely Algeria, Guyana and Mozambique, Sierra Leone reiterates its call for a scaled-up response to ameliorate the dire humanitarian crises in the region, growing food insecurity, climate change-induced adversities, health and education concerns, and the alarming mass forcible displacement of people.

17. Secondly, we reaffirm our collective responsibility and commitment to have zero tolerance for terrorism and to fulfill obligations in international counterterrorism instruments and conventions. Our fight against terrorism should be viewed globally, with efforts supported by necessary resources. We must transcend political interests and avoid double standards, recognizing terrorists as threats regardless of religion, region, or ethnicity.

18. Thirdly, security and regulatory frameworks and accountability mechanisms for coordinated response should be strengthened. With solid institutions working together, our efforts to prevent and hold responsible actors, supporters, and financiers internally and across borders are much improved.

19. Maintaining the credibility of the multilateral system in addressing these threats is essential. Reforming the working methods of the Committees dealing with Sanctions and Counter-terrorism to achieve greater transparency and accountability is imperative. Enlisting and delisting individuals and entities under the UN sanctions regimes must be done objectively, transcending political or religious reasons. Proposed changes should be carefully examined before circulation to maintain our collective credibility.

20. We, therefore, call on all Member States to reaffirm their collective responsibility and commitment to zero tolerance of terrorism. All Member States must fulfill their obligations in international counter-terrorism instruments and conventions to support our shared values, purposes, and principles toward maintaining international peace and security for all.

21. Sierra Leone continues to restate its positions on two issues: support the urgent finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) and convening a high-level conference

on terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations. Member States must consider their respective and shared interests and support the urgent finalization of the CCIT and convening a high-level conference on terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations.

22. In conclusion, **Chair**, as we continue to examine legal, policy, and institutional frameworks at all levels to address the threat of terrorism, we call for a comprehensive approach while ensuring that counterterrorism responses are gender sensitive and in compliance with international humanitarian law, human rights, and refugee law.

I Thank You.

