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Official Records

President: Mr. Lajčák (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Saikal (Afghanistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 118 (continued)

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/840)

Draft resolution (A/72/L.62)

Mrs. Baffoe (Norway): I would like to start by thanking the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Finland, Ms. Sima Sami Bahous and Mr. Kai Sauer, for their excellent work in co-facilitating the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I would also be remiss if I failed to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Muaz Mohamad Al-Otoom and Ms. Niina Nyrhinen, who have laboured so hard and guided our discussions so effectively. Yesterday's consensus agreement (see A/72/PV.101) is in large part due to their leadership, professionalism and congeniality.

The threat of terrorism and violent extremism remains intense and continues to evolve. Although substantial progress has been made in Syria and Iraq in reducing the threat posed there by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, it has not been eliminated and continues to mount attacks. The United Nations must play a central role in the collective response to terrorism and in preventing violent extremism. Norway believes that a balanced implementation of the Global Strategy is our best way forward. That includes addressing the

root causes and upstream factors of violent extremism, as highlighted in the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Norway continues to strongly support the Plan of Action, as it provides a much-needed emphasis on the first and second pillars of the Strategy. Preventing violent extremism entails ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law, and it requires that we address push and pull factors alike. We must ensure that the values of tolerance, pluralism and understanding are embedded in our societies. We must realize the potential of our young people, who are arguably our most important asset in the struggle against terrorism and violent extremism.

Civil-society organizations are powerful counterweights to violent extremist movements. Moreover, they offer a space for constructive engagement between society and State. A whole-of-society approach to preventing violent extremism requires careful attention to human rights and should include civil society at the local level as a key partner and stakeholder. Women's experience and leadership skills must be recognized and utilized. As Norway's Prime Minister, Erna Solberg, has repeatedly recalled, it is essential that we address the gender dimensions of violent extremism.

As the co-host, together with Jordan, of the Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism, Norway is particularly pleased to see that policies seeking to prevent violent extremism are now a core priority of Member States and across the United Nations. Member States have the primary responsibility for implementing measures to prevent violent extremism

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and counter terrorism, and I would like to highlight some of the efforts that Norway has undertaken since the last review.

On 23 and 24 May, in Oslo, Norway hosted a global high-level meeting on preventing violent extremism, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme. We have strengthened our whole-of-society approach by highlighting the role of women, young people and civil society in reintegration and rehabilitation. We have focused on research-based analysis as a foundation for policy development. As part of our prison and probation services, we have established a mentoring programme for prisoners serving sentences for terrorism in order to prepare them for reintegration into society when released. Finally, the police have increased their online presence with a view to preventing crime in general and radicalization and violent extremism in particular.

Norway is pleased to note the cross-regional support for the agenda on preventing violent extremism, as reflected in resolution 72/284. We are also very appreciative of the way in which the Office of Counter-Terrorism has made preventing violent extremism an integral part of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts. In addition, several Member States and regional organizations have already adopted or are developing plans of action to prevent violent extremism, with the support of the United Nations. We are also pleased to note that the resolution now explicitly recognizes the relevance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Security and development are always mutually reinforcing. Moreover, the review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has made it clear that the Strategy requires us to ensure respect for human rights and international law, partner with civil society and local communities, empower our youth and ensure full and complete gender equality. Those are all critical principles that we have a collective responsibility to respect and implement.

In closing, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his leadership and commitment to improving the ability of the United Nations to counter terrorism and violent extremism. We look forward to working with him, as well as Member States, as we continue our efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Horváth (Hungary): I am pleased to make a brief statement on behalf of Hungary concerning the

consensus adoption of resolution 72/284, on the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Hungary fully shares and aligns itself with the key elements in the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/72/PV.102).

Hungary is grateful for the Secretary-General's report (A/72/840) on the progress of the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which provides a solid starting point for the subsequent substantial debate. We commend the sensitive and tireless efforts of the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the Kingdom of Jordan and Finland, and their excellent teams, producing a sophisticated compromise that lays the groundwork for the balanced implementation of the Strategy for the next two years.

This year's resolution is particularly important for two reasons. First, it was adopted by consensus at a significant juncture when important developments are taking place in the global fight against terrorism, particularly in conflict zones in the Middle East; and secondly, because it also includes several current and perspective measures whose implementation will determine the outcome of the fight against terrorism, which constitutes not merely a challenge but a continuing major security risk for the entire global community.

The moral responsibility of all the States Members of the United Nations is to eliminate radicalization and the violent extremism leading to it once and for all, as well as to contribute to tackling the root causes of both international and domestic terrorism. We may have differing notions regarding many aspects of our joint fight against terrorism, but our final message is robust and identical — the terrorists cannot win. In that spirit, although Hungary has not been exposed to or targeted by terrorism, we share that moral responsibility and contribute tangibly in many ways to the success of our shared objective. The United Nations, and consequently the just-reviewed Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, has been and remains the cornerstone of a multilateral, whole-of-society, all-of-United Nations, comprehensive approach. If we are wondering how serious our intention to implement the Strategy is, we need only recall that immediately following the sixth review, the first-ever high-level conference of heads of counter-terrorism agencies of Member States will begin to translate the outcome of the review into practical cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to affirm that Hungary fully supported the adoption of the review resolution,

and is ready and committed to working with all the relevant bodies of the United Nations family, including especially the Office of Counter-Terrorism, as well as with all Member States, to defeat terrorism.

Mr. Akhinzhanov (Kazakhstan): The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting and to express our appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Finland and their able teams for facilitating the informal consultations on the sixth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We also welcome the latest report (A/72/840) of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations in implementing the Strategy, and thank him for his invitation to Member States to participate in the first United Nations high-level conference of heads of counter-terrorism agencies of Member States, to be held here in New York on 28 and 29 June, which will be an excellent opportunity to advance our common counter-terrorism agenda and forge new partnerships. We commend him for his excellent and very relevant and concrete proposal to establish a global network of national counter-terrorism coordinators under the auspices of the United Nations.

We fully align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/72/PV.101), and would like to add a few words in our national capacity.

The fight against terrorism requires a long-term and comprehensive approach, with the active participation and cooperation of Member States at all levels and in multidisciplinary dimensions. Regional and international networking is important to ensuring national capacity-building in various interrelated governmental sectors so as to successfully implement the Strategy. That is why, along with enhanced cooperation with the United Nations, Kazakhstan actively promotes the same shared goals with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Central Asia became the first region to adopt a joint action plan for implementing the landmark Global Strategy. Over the past five years, the countries of the region, with the assistance of the United Nations, have achieved much in terms both of preventing and

countering terrorism. They have enhanced their ability to fight terrorism and contributed to strengthening the role of the United Nations in the area.

Today the numbers of terrorism sympathizers motivated by propaganda promoted by terrorist organizations are constantly increasing. We must ensure that sophisticated modern technologies, the Internet and social networking outlets are not used by terrorist organizations to recruit young people on a global scale. That trend attests to the vital need to carefully examine how to achieve a true balance between individuals' rights and responsibilities in society while adopting effective measures to prevent and suppress terrorism in all its manifestations. We believe that the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and other United Nations counter-terrorism structures should consider conducting training sessions on how to plan and develop propaganda campaigns and disseminate counter-terrorism messages using modern techniques and technologies. That is why Kazakhstan has contributed to the project entitled "Towards a Comprehensive Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia". We are confident that our contribution will be used effectively and directly for the needs of Central Asia.

Our international and regional initiatives reinforce our efforts at the national level to address the risks of extremism and terrorism and prevent their manifestation in any form. The many measures include legislative and practical steps to ensure more rigorous punishments for terrorist and extremist activities. Taking into account the recommendations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the relevant Security Council resolutions and other countries' best practices, we have adopted a State programme on countering religious extremism and terrorism for the period 2018-2022. Its main goal is to ensure the safety of the people, the State and society through improved measures to prevent this scourge and minimize and eliminate its consequences. That is why it also envisages an active role for the non-governmental sector.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Kazakhstan's commitment, as a responsible member of the international community and a participant in all major international counter-terrorism tools, to working together with the United Nations family to eliminate this scourge.

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I thank the President for convening this debate on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and for this opportunity to share Fiji's views on the subject.

Our comments this morning are aligned with the statement delivered yesterday by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/72/PV.101).

I would like to express Fiji's appreciation and recognition to the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Jordan and their teams for their tireless efforts, professionalism and inclusiveness in facilitating the sixth review process. It is thanks to their stewardship that we have taken this big step forward.

The Assembly's consensus adoption yesterday of resolution 72/284 speaks to our collective determination to confront terrorism. When the Assembly unanimously adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006, Fiji called for a holistic and inclusive approach to counter-terrorism, and this resolution confirms that approach. Fiji is firmly committed to countering terrorism in all its forms. Terrorism threatens peace and security internationally, regionally and nationally. It affects us all. Fiji supports United Nations efforts by deploying Fijian peacekeepers in volatile regions across the world. The purpose of some of those deployments is to uphold peace and provide security for communities affected by acts associated directly or indirectly with terrorism. Fiji's commitment to such United Nations efforts is steadfast and time-tested.

The successful implementation of the resolution and the Strategy rests with us. We are required to work together. Countering terrorism starts with countering the financial networks that fund terrorism. The globalization of financial support for terrorism is a challenge of our times. The proceeds from illegal fishing on the high seas, from the production and supply chains of illicit drugs and from complex money-laundering webs and the emergence of new technology currencies present newer challenges. We must work to better understand how such finance networks operate and whether they affect global terrorism.

We Member States have given ourselves the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the defining framework for our aspirations. Extremism feeds off and is fuelled by failures across several of our SDG aspirations, especially those related to poverty, hunger and inequality. Our shared commitment to achieving

the SDGs comes up against the stark reality of significant financing gaps. National efforts to confront terrorism displace effort, energy and resources away from achieving our SDGs. The resolution will help us rebalance that, because by tackling terrorism cohesively, we promote peace and security, which are the fundamental building blocks for achieving all our SDGs.

The multilateralization of terrorism over the past decades underlines the importance of multilateralism in dealing with the defining challenges of our times — that is, confronting extremism and terrorism and promoting peace and security, which provide the building blocks for achieving all our SDGs, including those related to climate change and the oceans. Fiji reaffirms and firmly supports resolution 72/284.

Mr. Atlasi (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the co-facilitators, the Ambassadors of Jordan and Finland, as well as their teams, for the efforts they have made since the beginning of negotiations on the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. My delegation would also like to congratulate them on their success in reconciling the positions of Member States so that we could ultimately agree on a consensus text. The delegation of Morocco participated in the negotiations in a realistic and constructive spirit and, together with the United States of America, chaired the group discussing the paragraphs on foreign terrorist fighters in an effort to bring our views closer together. We welcome the adoption of resolution 72/284 after the long negotiations on a consensus text, thereby affirming the work of the sixth meeting to review the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

While not all the proposals were retained, we were able to agree on what does unite us. The Assembly's adoption of the resolution by consensus sends a strong signal to terrorists that the international community is united and stands together to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Morocco supports the implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The adoption in September 2006 of the Strategy, through Assembly resolution 60/288, was an appropriate response on the part of the international community to terrorism. It is a living document that must be updated every two years. In an unfortunate turn of events in 2014, the world was in upheaval as terrorist groups

gained control of major territories in Iraq, Syria, Mali, Somalia and so forth, thereby undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of those States and threatening others. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) was proclaimed.

Morocco therefore considers respect for States' sovereignty and territorial integrity particularly important and remains dedicated to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Moreover, the world is seeing an unprecedented proliferation of terrorist groups affiliated with Da'esh and Al-Qaida. Such groups lack any legitimacy in terms of the Islamic religion and have nothing to do with the principles of Islam. Their ideology is one of death, obscurantism and a rejection of all the values shared by humankind. The Kingdom of Morocco condemns terrorism in all its forms and emphasizes that nothing can justify a terrorist act. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

The Kingdom of Morocco shares the analysis of the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the Strategy (A/72/840), which urges us to work together and join our efforts in a non-political approach to confronting the scourge of terrorism and all the conditions that enable it to continue, such as financing and other kinds of support. Despite the defeat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria and other countries, its threat continues through its affiliate groups. We now have to consider the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters, including women and children, as an intensification of the terrorist threat that demands an urgent multilateral response in order to tackle all the repercussions of their return, strengthening our border security, international cooperation and information exchange, in accordance with the Strategy and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

Terrorists continue to exploit technological advances, the Internet, the media and social networks in order to spread their propaganda and attract new recruits, demanding their support in carrying out less sophisticated attacks in order to maximize the numbers of their victims and instil fear. To deal with that, we need greater vigilance, cooperation and sharing of information. In addition, we should immediately address the lack of cooperation at the regional, subregional and international levels, considering the increasingly transnational and multifaceted nature of transborder crime and trafficking of all kinds. We need

to launch a new era of collaboration in order to respond comprehensively in the fight against terrorism and the violent extremism that leads to terrorism.

Morocco supports the high-level conference of heads of counter-terrorism agencies of Member States, to be held over the next two days at United Nations Headquarters in New York, which is a step towards building a new cooperative and multilateral partnership and fostering a non-political approach to combating terrorism. Its theme is "Strengthening international cooperation to combat the evolving threat of terrorism", and it is therefore part of the continuing call for international cooperation.

The United Nations must play a key role in developing a legal framework for combating terrorism. That being said, other international forums, such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which Morocco co-chairs with the Netherlands, have adopted memorandums on best practices for combating terrorism, such as the Forum's The Hague-Marrakech memorandum. Member States have also developed their own successful national strategies that could be shared with other Member States at their request, in bilateral formats, with the help of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre.

The Kingdom of Morocco has developed a national strategy using a coherent and comprehensive approach aimed at safeguarding, preventing and taking action in line with the provisions of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the relevant Security Council resolutions. We base the strategy on, first, security governance, the implementation of a legal framework for combating terrorism, the adoption of new laws and security oversight; secondly, human development; and thirdly, the reform of religious services, particularly through the establishment of a scholarly authority responsible for interpreting the Qur'an and the Hadith. The training of young preachers, male and female, in the precepts of Islam — that is, the values of dialogue, tolerance, coexistence and mutual respect — is an intrinsic part of the Muslim religion. We have also launched a deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme for foreign terrorist fighters. The Mohammed VI Institute opened in 2015 to provide training for young imams, and a number of African and European countries have signed bilateral agreements with Morocco for the training of their imams.

The establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is in line with the desires of Member States and resulted from the fifth review meeting. Morocco is a firm supporter of the Office in its mandate to strengthen the capacities of Member States at their request. It should be equipped to respond properly to challenges with stable, predictable and diverse resources, the only way to guarantee a successful outcome. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, as part of the Office, should also be strengthened and supported with funding from the United Nations regular budget in order to ensure that its work continues uninterrupted. The Office, through the Centre, should help Member States in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Finally, Morocco will spare no effort in working with United Nations bodies and Member States to improve the implementation of the Strategy and combat terrorism and violent extremism.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Ms. Torsney (Inter-Parliamentary Union): The engagement of parliaments and parliamentarians is key to ensuring effective outcomes for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Strong parliaments that express the will of the people, with representation from every sector of society, can help to reduce marginalization and discrimination. Parliaments are responsible for enacting laws and setting budgets for national action. They must ensure that laws and criminal justice measures are implemented effectively, with full respect for human rights and the rule of law and avoiding the temptation of undemocratic responses, which could further fuel violent extremism.

Since 1996, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has adopted 12 resolutions relating to terrorism, all of which highlight the need for parliaments to support the implementation of United Nations counter-terrorism resolutions and strategies. In that regard, in 2015 the IPU and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) agreed to work together to strengthen the role of parliaments in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism.

In October 2017, at its 137th Assembly, the IPU Governing Council endorsed the establishment of a high-level advisory group on countering terrorism and violent extremism. The group is composed of high-level parliamentarians, experts in the field who will guide

the IPU-UNODC joint programme. The programme will support parliaments in implementing international counter-terrorism instruments and resolutions and provide members of parliament and parliamentary staff with tools and training, focusing on the rule of law and human rights. It will promote cooperation among parliamentary committees and facilitate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned. The programme seeks to facilitate the incorporation of international resolutions into domestic legislation and promote regional parliamentary cooperation. It will establish a web-based legislative database to serve as a repository for relevant legislation and a forum for information exchange.

The IPU-UNODC joint secretariat is working with the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism to broaden the impact of its parliamentary programme on global efforts to counter terrorism. The IPU looks forward to advancing this fruitful cooperation with the United Nations, bridging the implementation gaps and tackling the scourge of terrorism.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ms. Ostrauskaite (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe): At the outset, I would like to thank the President for inviting the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to share its perspective on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. As the largest regional organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE implements the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy at the regional level. We base our actions on a comprehensive mandate agreed to by 57 participating States. The OSCE secretariat, field operations and institutions assist participating States in developing comprehensive, nuanced and coordinated responses to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

Building capacity is vital to building resilient societies and States. In line with our overarching mandate to prevent and counter the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, our flagship initiative, “Leaders against Intolerance and Violent Extremism”, empowers young people, women and community leaders to speak out and mobilize others to help fight violent extremism at the local level. Our efforts are based on a whole-of-society approach. It

is crucial to involve and empower civil society, as its members usually have better access to communities at risk and a better understanding of the problems that such communities face.

The OSCE is currently developing a series of guidelines and handbooks. Their subjects range from engaging civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism to early interventions, implementing gender-sensitive operational approaches, countering terrorism and developing national strategies, action plans and policies. The series will serve as a user-friendly reference for practitioners and policymakers. The handbooks are tailored to the needs of different subregions, including South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

We have a wide-ranging programme on countering the financing of terrorism that we have developed together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The main concept behind our work is to help States follow the money, both where it is going and where it has come from. We train national experts in investigation and analysis and in how to disrupt such illicit financial flows using Security Council sanctions as well as national methods. The training is tailored to each country, depending on the latest reporting from the Financial Action Task Force.

The OSCE is also conducting training on countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes for law-enforcement, judiciary and media professionals. We hope to collaborate more closely with the respective United Nations agencies in this field. To counter the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, the OSCE has three dedicated mobile training teams for identifying potential foreign terrorist fighters at borders. They travel across the OSCE area, training officers in profiling, interviewing and behavioural techniques to prevent the movement of terrorists.

One of our largest training programmes is for front-line and second-line border guards on how to detect fraudulent documents and impostors. That is not enough, however. A border guard may only have between five and 10 seconds to decide whether someone is a terrorist or a criminal. As a result, the OSCE has been assisting States in establishing advance passenger

information and passenger-name record systems. Additionally, since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2396 (2017), biometrics are increasingly on our agenda. Terrorists and organized criminals may try to mask their identities by using a fake passport or taking on another identity, but it is a lot harder to fake fingerprints.

Partnerships are crucial to countering terrorism efforts. Joining forces creates synergies and amplifies impact. We welcomed the high-level participation of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the UNODC in the most recent OSCE-wide conference on countering terrorism, in Rome, which focused on tackling the reverse flow of foreign terrorist fighters. The conference highlighted the complex nature of the responses required and the need for stronger international and regional cooperation and enhanced coordination.

In order to strengthen our cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the OSCE hopes shortly to sign a memorandum of understanding. The memorandum will serve to enhance our joint planning of technical assistance in preventing violent extremism, countering terrorist financing, promoting rule-of-law responses to terrorism, countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes and ensuring critical infrastructure protection.

As the OSCE has adopted an integrative approach to capacity-building in Central Asia, we also look forward to advancing our joint activities with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

In conclusion, let us continue to work together to address the threat of terrorism.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 118?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.