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Chair: Mr. Afonso (Mozambique)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 112: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (continued) (A/77/185)

1. **Mr. Al Shehhi** (Oman) said that his Government condemned terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations, whatever their justification, and had developed a comprehensive and integrated strategy to enhance security and promote coexistence and tolerance in its country. It commended the Office of Counter-Terrorism for the pivotal role it played in strengthening international solidarity for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Oman had acceded to numerous international and regional counter-terrorism and anti-money-laundering instruments, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Oman was a regional and global model of a terrorism-free society, as attested by international reports. His delegation hoped that international counter-terrorism efforts would be strengthened through practical measures and stressed the need to address, in a non-discriminatory manner, the root causes of intolerance in all its forms.

2. **Ms. Atley** (United Kingdom) said that 2022 had been a challenging year for Ukraine, the world and the rule of law, with an illegal invasion of one Member State by a permanent member of the Security Council, followed by sham referendums held in an attempt to illegally annex sovereign Ukrainian territory. Both acts were clear violations of the Charter of the United Nations. The United Kingdom called on the Russian Federation to end its illegal acts and to meet its international legal obligations in full. Events in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa demonstrated that terrorism was a continuing threat and its expansion and evolution across new theatres demanded an agile response from the international community. The United Kingdom focused its efforts on degrading and defeating Da'esh and its affiliates, Al-Qaida senior leadership and Al-Shabaab, as well as tackling new and emerging threats.

3. While technology had brought many positive changes, it had also presented new risks. Terrorists had harnessed technology to enhance the lethality of their attacks. The international community must adapt its capabilities to counter the terrorist use of drones and to prevent cyberattacks. The United Kingdom welcomed the progress made in preventing the use by terrorists of the Internet, including through the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, while remaining mindful of the need to protect freedom of expression. A concerning trend was the migration of terrorists from

larger platforms to smaller platforms that were less able to address such threats.

4. There was no justification for States to act beyond the bounds of international law or to violate human rights in the name of counter-terrorism, as that could exacerbate the terrorist threat by bolstering grievance-based terrorist recruitment narratives. The United Kingdom, working closely with its international partners, regularly raised its concerns about such overreach through the United Nations system, including the Human Rights Council.

5. Successfully countering terrorism and violent extremism required the integration of gender and civil society perspectives. The United Kingdom was working to engage civil society in order to further its own domestic and overseas counter-terrorism policies and to understand how the United Nations could better incorporate civil society perspectives into counter-terrorism policymaking. Such perspectives were essential to strengthening community-based efforts to prevent terrorism.

6. **Mr. Alobaid** (Kuwait) said that terrorism continued to represent a grave danger in many parts of the world and a direct threat to international peace and security. Kuwait rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its justification. Terrorism should not be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. Governments must cooperate in the international counter-terrorism effort and aim to establish measures that promoted human rights and the rule of law; combat impunity; address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty; foster sustainable development, good governance and peaceful coexistence; and ensure respect for religious symbols and holy sites.

7. The repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families to their countries of origin and their social reintegration and rehabilitation, as well as accountability and prosecution of the perpetrators of terrorist acts, posed an immense challenge for the international community. Kuwait, a member of the international counter-Da'esh coalition, had facilitated the travel of more than 430 family members of fighters from Syria to their countries of origin. It stood ready to continue its cooperation with the international community to address the consequences of the presence of foreign terrorist fighters and their families in prisons and camps in unstable conflict zones.

8. His Government had developed and participated in workshops at home and abroad on countering money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and stressed

the importance of reintegrating and rehabilitating fighters returning from conflict regions.

9. **Ms. Yapi Née Bah** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that, like other countries in West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire had been hard hit by terrorist attacks, including the attack perpetrated on 13 March 2016 in Grand-Bassam and other attacks along the northern border with Burkina Faso and Mali. The Government had taken a number of measures in response. At the national level, it had amended its laws on the suppression of terrorism, in 2015, and on money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, in 2016. Another law, enacted in 2018, criminalized the financing of terrorist organizations. In cooperation with France, an international counter-terrorism academy had been opened in Jacqueville, several kilometres from Abidjan, to help build the capacities of national and international stakeholders active in the fight against terrorism.

10. Côte d'Ivoire supported the counter-terrorism decisions of the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union and actively participated in information-sharing and transborder military cooperation under the Accra Initiative. Côte d'Ivoire was also a party to 19 instruments for the prevention of international terrorism in the areas of civil aviation, maritime navigation, hostage-taking and the financing of terrorism. In 2021, it had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of Counter-Terrorism as part of the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, which would help prevent and detect terrorist crimes through the use of advance passenger information and passenger name records.

11. Her delegation called for greater international solidarity to support funding of African peace initiatives. It would also work actively with other delegations for the finalization of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Her country also supported the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to develop a response to terrorism in all its forms.

12. **Mr. Alktheeri** (United Arab Emirates) said that the best way to deter terrorism was by addressing its root causes and adopting preventive measures. The international community had made great strides in spreading the values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence and acceptance of others, in particular through the development by the United Nations of a strategy to prevent extremism. Terrorism must not be linked to any religion, as terrorist groups sought to distort religious views as a means of spreading their agenda and sowing division among communities.

13. Responses to terrorism must be commensurate with the scale of the threat to international peace and security. States should attempt to anticipate threats while continuing to update their strategies and legal frameworks in line with the evolving nature of terrorism, especially in the light of the use by terrorist groups, including Da'esh, Al-Qaida and the Houthis, of advanced technology and weapons in cross-border attacks targeting civilians and infrastructure. The international community should correct course and not continue to rely on an unequal two-track approach to counter-terrorism whereby United Nations agencies focused on Al-Qaida and Da'esh at the expense of other terrorist groups, even those acknowledged in Security Council reports.

14. Member States should continue to fulfil their obligations under United Nations resolutions and international law. They should take steps to formulate a comprehensive definition of terrorism and continue updating national and international laws, including laws to prevent terrorists from obtaining advanced technologies and weapons. At the national level, the United Arab Emirates had adopted laws concerning the prosecution of terrorists and the prohibition of money-laundering. It had also acceded to more than 15 regional and international counter-terrorism instruments.

15. A focus on counter-terrorism capacity-building of States through training and exchange of expertise would help to stop the financing of terrorism and cut off the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. The United Arab Emirates had recently supported the Hedayah Centre in the formulation of recommendations on the rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters.

16. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that the international community had achieved tangible results in countering terrorism, developing international law, promoting cooperation and coordination and enhancing the counter-terrorism capacities of States. Despite the adoption of international instruments and essential normative, organizational and practical efforts at the global, regional and subregional levels, terrorism remained an immediate threat in many regions and had become more geographically, ideologically and tactically diverse. Terrorists made use of information and communications technologies to spread disinformation and hate speech and disruption critical infrastructure. The threat of terrorism from racially and ethnically motivated individuals and groups had also increased.

17. Terrorism continued to benefit from domestic and transnational organized crime and from the abuse of

non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Armed conflicts had created conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists and other non-State actors, especially those whose operational capabilities were backed by States or those with uncontrolled access to armaments and ammunition. Terrorist acts committed in the context of armed conflict could amount to war crimes, thus entailing individual criminal responsibility and obliging States to investigate, prosecute and punish offenders. International cooperation in criminal matters was needed to address such acts.

18. The fight against impunity for terrorist activities was critical. No amnesty or any other form of early release could be granted for perpetrators of terrorist acts. Moreover, the shielding and glorification of terrorists could not be tolerated. All States must comply with their international counter-terrorism obligations in order to ensure, *inter alia*, that their territories were not used for terrorist, separatist and other related activity.

19. His delegation rejected as false and irresponsible the information provided by Armenia for the report of the Secretary-General (A/77/185), as well as the statement delivered by the representative of Armenia under the current agenda item, the purpose of which was to mislead the international community and conceal that country's own racially motivated terrorist and related criminal offences. Armenia had a long-standing track record of supporting and using terrorism at the national level. Since the late 1980s, Armenia and a number of terrorist organizations under its direction and control had committed numerous terrorist acts against Azerbaijan, claiming the lives of thousands of Azerbaijani citizens.

20. The territories of Azerbaijan formerly occupied by Armenia were a graphic example of the heavy militarization carried out by Armenian occupying forces and their interpenetration with international terrorism and organized crime. The evidence collected prior to and throughout the hostilities in the autumn of 2020 showed that Armenia had recruited foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries from Europe, the Middle East and North America and that civil aviation had been used to transfer such persons and weapons to the conflict zone, in violation of international law. The Armenian diaspora, operating under the disguise of charity organizations and NGOs, had been engaged in facilitating the recruitment and transfer process and in raising funds and collecting other material means to finance terrorist activities and support the aggression against Azerbaijan.

21. Furthermore, the continued territorial claims and terrorist objectives of Armenia were evidenced by its use of fictitious place names in its formal

communications and pronouncements, in the information it had submitted for the report of the Secretary-General and in the statement made by its representative in the Committee earlier that day. The so-called "Nagorno-Karabakh" had long ceased to exist as an administrative and territorial unit. That area was an integral part of Azerbaijan that had been under unlawful Armenian occupation for nearly three decades. The Karabakh and East Zangezur economic regions had been established in Azerbaijan pursuant to the presidential decree issued on 7 July 2021.

22. As a member of the United Nations, Armenia should be aware that only geographical names established by legitimate and competent national authorities for locations under their sovereign territory were to be recognized and used in the Organization. The respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States was an absolute imperative. Azerbaijan would continue to take all necessary measures to curb terrorist activities and to prosecute and punish terrorist offenders.

23. **Mr. Portorreal Brandao** (Dominican Republic) said that his Government condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomever committed. It rejected the association of terrorism with any religion, nationality or culture. In order to combat that scourge, it was necessary to adopt a comprehensive and strategic vision that included measures that aligned with obligations under international law, in particular human rights, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

24. The Dominican Republic had acceded to and complied with the main international and inter-American anti-terrorism instruments. Its Government had implemented domestic legislative reforms to combat the financing of terrorism and trafficking in arms and to control nuclear materials. It had strengthened its institutional capacity, including by upgrading border and customs control systems and enhancing travel document security, in order to hinder the movement of terrorists and prevent trafficking in illicit materials. The Government had also adopted measures to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations while fostering close cooperation between States and relevant international organizations.

25. The Government continued to the country's build capacity to prevent and detect the transit, trafficking and use of terrorist material and, with the support of the Government of Canada and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States, had developed a programme to

enhance security at all domestic ports. It had also introduced a programme to facilitate the implementation of certain aspects of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

26. A comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the elimination of terrorism could only succeed through international cooperation, with the international community addressing the root causes of the phenomenon, such as poverty, lack of development and religious and racial discrimination and stigmatization.

27. **Mr. Kayalar** (Türkiye) said that his delegation condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism was a grave violation of human rights and undermined fundamental rights and freedoms. It was one of the greatest threats to peace, security and social development. All acts of terrorism were unjustified, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomever committed. Terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group.

28. Türkiye had been at the forefront of combating terrorist organizations such as Da'esh, Al-Qaida, the Kurdistan Workers' Party/Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat/People's Protection Units (PKK/PYD/YPG) and the Fethullah Gulen terrorist organization for years. Those and other groups had been operating across national borders, running training camps, acquiring financial resources and operating media outlets to disseminate their propaganda and glorify their acts abroad. Regrettably, some perpetrators of terrorist attacks, their accomplices and financiers had evaded justice and continued to travel freely.

29. Counter-terrorism efforts could not succeed without increased international cooperation on the basis of the "extradite or prosecute" principle so as to deny safe haven to terrorists. No distinction should be made between terrorist organizations. Combating one terrorist organization while relying on support from another undermined overall counter-terrorism efforts. Although bilateral, regional and cross-regional cooperation mechanisms were useful, the United Nations was the main platform for promoting a collective and coherent response to terrorism. Türkiye was therefore committed to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

30. The international community should maintain its commitment to combat Da'esh and Al-Qaida while refraining from cooperation with other terrorist organizations. It should also pay attention to the territorial expansion of terrorist groups in several regions of Africa and continue its efforts to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terrorists.

31. Türkiye was an active member of the international counter-Da'esh coalition and the only country that put boots on the ground to eliminate more than 4,500 Da'esh members in Syria. It had deported thousands of foreign nationals suspected of activity related to foreign terrorist fighters; put on its no-entry list more than 110,000 foreign nationals with connections to terrorism; and screened passengers, conducted interviews at major airports, bus and train stations and denied entry to thousands of individuals.

32. Foreign terrorist fighters should be repatriated so that they could be prosecuted, rehabilitated and reintegrated. Temporary and legally unsound solutions to prevent the return of such fighters would not solve the problem. Responsibility for their so-called detention should not be left to other terrorist groups. Member States should avoid actions that, even if implicitly and inadvertently, would provide legitimacy for other terrorist organizations.

33. Efforts to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism were also an important part of his country's approach to effectively addressing terrorism. Turkish institutions were committed to achieving a higher level of compliance with Financial Action Task Force standards and Türkiye took swift action in implementing Security Council decisions on sanctions. The nexus between organized crime and terrorism should not be disregarded. The manufacturing and smuggling of narcotics and firearms, trafficking in persons and other illegal activities were significant sources of revenue for terrorist groups. In that regard, Türkiye valued the independent and impartial role played by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

34. His Government attached importance to upholding the human rights of victims in the fight against terrorism and therefore commended the Office of Counter-Terrorism for organizing the first United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism. It also hoped that progress would be achieved in the negotiations aimed at concluding the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

35. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms, regardless of the justification. Terrorism must not be linked to any culture, religion, nationality, race or ethnic group. His Government was deeply concerned about the increased threats to international peace and security and to the stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States as a result of international terrorism. It deplored the increase in terrorist activity in Africa, notably in areas characterized by porous borders, poverty and poor

security, in which Da'esh and other terrorist groups had increased their activities. Morocco faced a real threat from terrorism owing to its geostrategic location close to the Sahel, had facilitated the smuggling of illicit goods and trafficking of drugs, persons and weapons by terrorist organizations.

36. His Government had adopted a proactive and multidimensional security strategy that focused on preventing terrorism while fully respecting human rights and the rule of law. The strategy aligned with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, with the socioeconomic, religious, legal and security aspects of the issue duly taken into consideration. The Government had adopted a counter-terrorism law that criminalized the act of joining or attempting to join a terrorist entity or organization. It had also established a commission to implement Security Council resolutions concerning the financing of terrorism.

37. Morocco had signed and ratified all international instruments on counter-terrorism. Rabat was host to the Programme Office for Counter-Terrorism and Training in Africa, which was responsible for developing and implementing capacity-building programmes, especially those concerning security, investigations, border control and efforts aimed at the rehabilitation and reintegration of radicals. Morocco was also Co-Chair of the Global Counterterrorism Forum.

38. **Mr. Koba** (Indonesia) said that all States rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever, by whomever and against whomever committed. Terrorism was a threat to the territorial integrity and stability of States and to international peace and security, and a direct challenge to the attainment of progress and prosperity. Acts of terrorism constituted a flagrant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

39. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had magnified the potential drivers of terrorism, such as economic hardship and social grievances. As the world slowly returned to its normal activities in the aftermath of the pandemic, States should promote vigilance and agility in order to prevent and respond to the resurgence of terrorism, whose methods, organization and networks continued to evolve. There had been a rise in the use of emerging technologies, such as drones, to increase the lethality of attacks, and of social media to incite extremist narratives. A business-as-usual approach to such worrying trends was not adequate.

40. No country was immune to terrorism and no country, no matter how powerful, could overcome it alone. International cooperation in legal, institutional

and human capacity-building was important to help States deal with the threat of terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was pivotal in that regard. It should be implemented in a transparent, comprehensive and balanced manner across its four pillars. Indonesia stood ready to participate constructively in the negotiations of the eighth review of the Strategy, to be held in 2023.

41. Indonesia supported the working group established by the Committee with a view to finalizing the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism as well as discussions on the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Indonesia also encouraged States to make every effort to reach a consensus in resolving outstanding issues related to the legal definition of terrorism.

42. Measures for the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorists were an integral part of a comprehensive approach to the terrorist threat. Without such measures, terrorists could easily fall into an endless cycle of recidivism. Promoting a spirit of tolerance and strengthening dialogue among religions and cultures could also assist in preventing radicalization. The international community must continue to reaffirm that terrorism should not be linked to a particular religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

43. **Ms. Sao** (Mauritania) said that her country firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and remained resolutely committed to subregional and regional initiatives aimed at combating the phenomenon. Mauritania had adopted a multidimensional approach for dealing with extremism, working with young people to promote moderation, a harmonious society, a spirit of tolerance and respect for others. It had developed a national counter-terrorism strategy covering the legal, security and military, political and diplomatic, and cultural and religious dimensions of terrorism.

44. On the legal front, the aim was to develop a new legal system that can address terrorism and eliminate its sources of financing, in a manner that was consistent with both Mauritanian and international law. In that connection, her Government had brought many of the country's laws into line with its anti-terrorism law, and had established a body to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. Under the security and military dimension, it had prioritized intelligence work to prevent terrorist attacks and the creation of sleeper cells, and had set up security agencies to deal with terrorist threats. As part of the political and diplomatic dimension, Nouakchott had hosted the 2014 summit at which the Group of Five for the Sahel had been created.

45. As part of the religious and cultural dimension, the Government had marshalled the “soft power” of society by appealing to scholars, jurists, intellectuals and other prominent persons to address religious extremism among young people. Mauritanian religious scholars had issued fatwas warning against religious extremism excesses and scholars and imams had met with radical prisoners to educate them about encourage religious moderation. Various government departments had organized hundreds of seminars on terrorism attended by religious scholars from Mauritania and abroad. The Government had helped extremist fighters to reintegrate into society by financing their income-generating projects.

46. Cooperation in criminal matters was a key tool in the fight against international terrorism and other forms of transnational crime, particularly in the Sahel, which faced threats from the Organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and various transborder criminal groups. In an effort to strengthen cooperation in that area, the Sahel States of Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, with support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, had in 2010 established the Sahel Judicial Platform to strengthen judicial cooperation in criminal matters among its member States, in line with their bilateral, regional and international obligations. The Group of Five for the Sahel was an essential framework for ensuring an integrated approach to counter-terrorism and merited the support of the international community.

47. **Ms. Sulimani** (Sierra Leone) said that her Government unequivocally condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations wherever and by whomsoever committed. There could be no justification for the acts of terrorism and violence that had emanated from the unlawful demonstration held in Sierra Leone on 10 August 2022. Her delegation called for continued international cooperation to ensure accountability for the deaths of several civilians and police officers and the destruction of public and private properties. International cooperation was needed to address misuse of the Internet and social media to incite acts of terrorism and disseminate extremism and hate speech.

48. In 2021, Sierra Leone had enacted a law on cybersecurity and cybercrime that criminalized the use of not only computers or computer systems or networks for terrorist purposes but also racist or xenophobic material. The law recognized and protected the fundamental human rights and freedoms of individuals in line with the Constitution of Sierra Leone and provided for judicial oversight and the recognition of legal privileges. Sierra Leone continued to implement

its 2005 anti-money laundering law, which included the prohibition and punishment of the financing of terrorism, and would continue to implement biometric identification and verification processes at all points of entry in order to identify individuals on the global terrorist list.

49. It was important for the Committee to make progress on General Assembly resolution [76/121](#), in which the Assembly had decided to recommend that the Committee establish a working group with a view to finalizing the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism as well as discussions on the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Concrete steps should be taken immediately to resolve outstanding issues relating to the draft convention. Merely reiterating positions would not achieve that goal. In order to achieve progress, Member States must consider their common interests, one of which was ensuring that the General Assembly discharged its mandate to codify and progressively develop international law.

50. In its capacity as coordinator of the informal working group on outstanding issues, Sierra Leone called for renewed commitment and innovative thinking with a view to finalizing the convention. To that end, the Committee could agree to work on the procedural aspects and modalities for the convening of a high-level conference on terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations. It could also identify issues that could be resolved at the political level while simultaneously ascertaining ways to safeguard the effectiveness of the current framework.

51. **Mr. Mouctar** (Chad) said that terrorism blurred the lines between crime and war and between international and domestic security. To confront it at the national level, Chad had strengthened its legal counter-terrorism framework with the establishment of a national office on drugs and terrorism and a judicial counter-terrorism unit. At the regional and international levels, it participated in the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. It also took part in subregional and regional cooperation endeavours, in particular the Sahel Judicial Cooperation Platform.

52. Chad welcomed the seventh review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and acknowledged the important role played by relevant United Nations agencies, especially the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office on

Drugs and Crime, in supporting States in the fight against terrorism. Challenges nevertheless persisted in Africa, in particular in the Sahel region, where terrorist attacks were intensifying and spreading, dangerously undermining development efforts. Urgent action was needed to establish a programme for the coordinated repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters; to strengthen efforts to counter the financing of terrorism, including all forms of organized crime that fuelled it, and to help dismantle terrorist networks. There was also a need to address regional conflict hotbeds that served as wellsprings of terrorism and organized crime.

53. Chad welcomed the establishment of the Independent High-level Panel on Security and Development in the Sahel, which it hoped would help to identify robust responses and mobilize the needed resources to support States in their effort to address the devastating crisis in the region. His delegation also welcomed the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 76/121 to recommend that the Committee establish a working group on the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Measures to eliminate international terrorism must address its root causes, including poverty, underdevelopment and the ravages of climate change.

54. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that, for more than a decade, the daily lives of the people of the Sahel had been marked by the worst forms of terrorist and extremist violence. In addition to the general insecurity caused by deadly attacks, people had been deprived of their basic rights to education, health, food, freedom of movement and freedom of religion. Terrorism also fuelled other forms of organized crime, such as trafficking in drugs, arms, illicit goods and migrants. In the aftermath of the Transforming Education Summit, there was hope regarding the international community's commitment to provide equal opportunities to children around the world. However, his delegation wondered about the effectiveness of that commitment in its region, where thousands of children were deprived of the right to education owing to insecurity, which forced the luckiest among them to be displaced and the less lucky to be child soldiers under the influence of narcotics or to be abused or raped.

55. His Government had adopted a strategy and plan of action to combat terrorism and violent extremism, in order to seek solutions to the root causes of terrorism, bearing in mind local realities. The goals were to support mechanisms for intrafaith dialogue; train religious leaders; promote the traditional sources of stability in the community; introduce education on a culture of peace and human rights; and finance rapid-impact projects for the benefit of disadvantaged

populations. With support from partners, the Government had also adopted a number of institutional and regulatory measures, including the establishment of bodies such as the anti-terrorist special forces, a specialized judicial unit on terrorism and transnational organized crime, a national financial information processing unit and a central narcotics office.

56. The Government had also adopted laws on the suppression of terrorism, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and on the prevention and suppression of illicit gains. The Penal Code had also been revamped to strengthen the existing framework. In parallel with those measures, his Government was continuing to recruit, train, equip and strengthen the operational capacities of the defence and security forces in facing the terrorist threat and protecting people and their property. Since terrorism was a transnational phenomenon, his country's anti-terrorist measures involved regional cooperation. Since 2017, Bamako had been the seat of the ECOWAS National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Coordination Centre. A framework had also been set for judicial and police cooperation between Mali and the countries in its region in combating terrorism and transnational organized crime.

57. His delegation believed that no individual or country, no matter how powerful, was exempt from the global scourge of terrorism, and thus called upon States to coordinate their strategies and actions in order to fight terrorism and violent extremism. The first step in that regard was for them to agree on a definition of terrorism.

58. **Mr. Peñaranda** (Philippines) said that terrorism was a pervasive threat to international security and economic development that respected no border, nationality or creed. The Philippines denounced all forms of terrorism, including acts of aggression and violence under the guise of war. Blatant and serious violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations must be met with severe consequences.

59. His Government, guided by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, remained vigilant and determined in its fight against terrorism. It had enhanced cooperation at all levels, refined and updated its national legal framework and sustained the engagement of stakeholders. In recent years, the Philippines had intensified its cooperation with the United Nations and partner States on capacity-building programmes and activities targeted at equipping law enforcement personnel and modernizing facilities and digital capabilities. The Philippines lauded the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and other United Nations entities

for bringing in experts and introducing new programmes and processes.

60. The Philippines had participated in the first United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, organized by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, and its law enforcement agencies had been implementing agreements concluded with neighbouring Asian countries and other Member States on terrorism and transnational crime. It had also updated its terrorism laws, most notably with the enactment in 2020 of anti-terrorism and anti-money-laundering laws. The Philippines was the first country in Southeast Asia to adopt a national action plan to prevent and combat violent extremism. It had held workshops attended by civil society organizations, government agencies, academics and youth and women representatives.

61. In countering terrorism, its root causes must be addressed holistically through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach with participation from intergovernmental organizations, civil society, communities and victims and their families. Differences also need to be addressed and common ground found through the conclusion of a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism.

62. **Mr. Amorín** (Uruguay) said that all States had an obligation to prevent and criminalize the financing of terrorism, which constituted a threat to international peace and security. His Government implemented the recommendations contained in the resolutions of the General Assembly, even when those resolutions only had a recommendatory value from a legal perspective. It attached particular importance to and had supported the negotiation process and adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It also attached particular importance to the seventh review of the Strategy, which had addressed the need to adapt to recent geopolitical changes that had taken place recently in the field of counter-terrorism, with the expansion of the international terrorist threat beyond the Middle East to Europe, Asia and, increasingly, Africa, and the emergence of new terrorist threats with various ideological and political roots sought to undermine State sovereignty and human rights. There was a need for a deeper analysis of the impact of new technologies on counter-terrorism efforts, with special attention paid to cybersecurity, the use of communication media to spread hate, and the importance of protecting critical infrastructure.

63. Uruguay was also a party to 18 of the 19 international instruments on the prevention of terrorism and the remaining instrument, the 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of

Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, was under consideration by Parliament. The Counter-Terrorism Committee had visited Uruguay in 2012, 2014 and 2017. After each visit, it had issued a report with recommendations to help the country strengthen its institutional capacity and responses to international terrorism. Those reports had highlighted that, although Uruguay had made progress in implementing the resolutions of the Security Council and the recommendations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, more remained to be done. His Government had taken steps to address those gaps by adopting laws on the financing of terrorism and making efforts to implement the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force.

64. It was extremely important to support the victims of terrorism. According to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the dehumanization of the victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations created a conducive environment for the spread of terrorism. Under international and regional human rights norms, States had both the right and the obligation to protect persons under their jurisdiction from terrorist attacks. Parliaments played a key role in that regard through the adoption of laws, the allocation of budgets and the inclusion of relevant issues in the public agenda. With the introduction in 2017 of its new Code of Criminal Procedure, Uruguay had replaced its inquisitorial system with an adversarial system in which respect for constitutional guarantees was reaffirmed. The new Code was intended to expedite judicial procedures for all crimes, particularly those of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. Victims, who had been overlooked in the previous system, took on new importance in the adversarial process. The counter-terrorism law adopted in 2019 also incorporated a clear human rights perspective and provided for compensation for persons harmed physically or otherwise as a result of terrorist acts or acts committed in the name of counter-terrorism.

65. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism and terrorism linked to overt and covert operations and policies, and attempts to remove legitimate governments by destabilizing countries or carrying out coups d'état. Nicaragua was making a significant contribution to stability, peace and security in its region, and had helped contain the spread of terrorism through its family- and community-based approach. His delegation strongly supported the development of an international convention on terrorism and looked forward to the eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to be held in 2023.

66. In the midst of a pandemic, the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against States was tantamount to a crime against humanity. Such measures also had a devastating effect on efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the elimination of poverty, and also hindered access to the resources necessary to combat terrorism. Nicaragua would continue to foster a culture of peace through economic, political and social development, gender equality, security and the eradication of poverty for all Nicaraguans, without discrimination.

67. **Mr. Domingos** (Mozambique) said that, since 2017, his country had been the direct target of international terrorism involving foreign combatants who, together with young Mozambican recruits, had terrorised, kidnapped and murdered defenceless people, especially children, women and the elderly, and forced the survivors to become refugees. Those barbaric actions had resulted in the destruction of infrastructure and of the socioeconomic fabric, undermining the development process at a time when his country was preparing to position itself as an important player in international energy geopolitics. Mozambique was strongly committed to combating international terrorism and supported continued concerted efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and all relevant international instruments and mechanisms.

68. Mozambique was a party to the main international legal instruments for the prevention and suppression of terrorism and supported the strengthening of the international legal framework, including through the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It shared with international partners its response and actions to combat international terrorism, which were aligned with the regional, continental and international references, including the counter-terrorism strategy of the Southern African Development Community and the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

69. Mozambique continued to promote the active engagement of religious communities in counter-terrorism efforts, while noting that terrorists continued to justify their criminal actions on religious grounds, contrary to the views held by Mozambican religious authorities. With the strong support of partners, the Government was implementing programmes to promote development, training and job creation, including a resilience and development programme for northern Mozambique. The support of the United Nations for such initiatives was paramount. Mozambique was also

strengthening its institutional capacity and updating its legal framework in order to narrow gaps that could be exploited by terrorist groups and to promote international judicial cooperation.

70. In an effort to tackle terrorism-related transnational organized crime, Mozambique had reviewed its laws on the prevention, suppression and combating of terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. Respect for human rights and the rule of law, including guarantees of individual rights, should prevail in counter-terrorism efforts. To date, efforts to rehabilitate terrorists had been largely successful. Mozambique had also strengthened its national defence capability in order to address the growing threat to its sovereignty and stability.

71. His delegation welcomed the deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique and that of Rwanda, which had been fighting terrorism successfully alongside the Mozambican Army. That example of regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism went beyond military cooperation and contributed to the strengthening of regional dialogue. While combating terrorism was primarily the responsibility of States, a multilateral approach was of primary importance. The Committee and the United Nations as a whole played a crucial role in promoting a concerted global response to international terrorism.

72. **Mr. Gimolieca** (Angola) said that terrorism was a permanent item on his country's governance agenda. The growing wave of terrorism was creating new challenges for international relations and peacekeeping efforts. Combating terrorism was a joint responsibility of the entire international community. International law was an effective instrument in the common fight against terrorist attacks, committed on ideological or religious pretexts, that contravened the supreme principle of human dignity. Addressing that threat could be challenging given the complexity of terrorist activity and the evolving nature of the financing of terrorism, methods of attack and choice of targets. Given the transnational nature of terrorist acts and actors, strong coordination and cooperation among States at the regional and international levels were essential for the sharing of best practices and the provision of mutual assistance in investigations.

73. Angola was strengthening the capacity of its institutions responsible for combating terrorism and economic and financial crimes, such as the courts, the Office of the Attorney General and the criminal investigation service. His Government, seeking more

efficient and effective solutions in the fight against all forms of international terrorism, had enacted laws on money-laundering, judicial cooperation in criminal matters and the repatriation of financial resources. A new Penal Code criminalized genocide, crimes against humanity and crimes of international terrorism. In addition, a financial information unit had been established. Angola had established fruitful international judicial cooperation with several States on criminal and civil matters, including through the exchange of information and judicial requests.

74. **Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) said that terrorism was the common enemy of humanity and that combating it was the shared responsibility of the international community. While significant progress had been made in recent years in the global fight against terrorism, much remained to be done, given the resurgence of global terrorist activities. Terrorist groups used advanced technology to promote extremist ideologies and employed the tactics of warfare in their attacks, making them more difficult to prevent and combat.

75. The COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated poverty and social problems and had facilitated the spread of extremist ideologies. As a result of the persistent threats to security posed by terrorism, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was clearly behind schedule and increasingly difficult to achieve. International counter-terrorism cooperation faced complex challenges. Some countries had cut back their global counter-terrorism strategies, creating regional counter-terrorism vacuums, and some had fabricated human rights issues to justify interference in the counter-terrorism efforts of other States. Under the banner of counter-terrorism, some countries were taking unilateral measures and employing bullying tactics, which had disrupted international cooperation.

76. In the face of the new global security landscape, his Government had established a new security initiative with a special emphasis on maintaining traditional and non-traditional security responses to global issues, including terrorism. It stood ready to cooperate with the international community to jointly combat terrorism. In the spirit of true multilateralism, as no country could deal with terrorist threats alone. The central coordinating role of the United Nations in that regard should be upheld and information-sharing and operational coordination should be scaled up at the international, regional and national levels.

77. The international rule of law as it pertained to counter-terrorism should be strengthened. Counter-terrorism efforts must be in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The

sovereignty of all countries should be respected and their legitimate security concerns should be taken seriously. Double standards and selective approaches to counter-terrorism should be avoided. Terrorism should not be linked to specific countries, Governments, ethnicities or religions and counter-terrorism should not be politicized or instrumentalized. A comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be developed as soon as possible to improve the international counter-terrorism legal framework.

78. Counter-terrorism capacity-building should be strengthened. The international community should make full use of technology in that regard and also take concrete measures to enhance the counter-terrorism capabilities of developing countries. China would continue to support countries in their efforts to maintain regional security and combat terrorism. An integrated approach should be used to address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism. Development should be prioritized and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda accelerated in order to break the vicious circle of poverty and terrorism. Attention should be paid to issues affecting young people, especially education and employment, and deradicalization efforts should be intensified in order to prevent them from being poisoned by terrorist ideology.

79. China was a victim of terrorism. Combating the forces of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, designated an international terrorist organization by the Security Council, was an essential part of the international fight against terrorism and served the common interests of the international community. Reports indicated that the Movement was currently still active in planning and carrying out terrorist attacks in cooperation with other terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida, and was trying to extend its reach. China hoped that the international community would recognize the violent and terrorist nature of the Movement and would implement the sanction measures proposed by the Security Council.

80. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that those who attempted to dismantle the international law order in the name of the fight against terrorism undermined both that order and that fight. The gravest threat to global efforts to fight terrorism was the weaponization of counter-terrorism to deny a people its right to self-determination and to other fundamental rights, and to do so with full impunity. The State of Palestine continued to warn against the long-standing Israeli policy of criminalizing political activism and the work of civil society, humanitarian actors and human rights defenders. It commended the international community for its firm stance against the unlawful

Israeli practice of designating renowned Palestinian human rights and humanitarian non-governmental organizations as terrorist organizations. Israel must reverse that designation and halt its attacks against Palestinian civil society.

81. The gravest form of terrorism was State-sponsored terrorism that subjected an entire nation's rights, people and land to indiscriminate, widespread and systematic attack. The Palestinian people were subjected to aggression and terror by the Israeli occupation forces and settler organizations, which acted with total impunity. Their obvious aim clearly to dispossess and displace the Palestinian people and unlawfully annex Palestinian land, in violation of the Charter, relevant United Nations resolutions and international law. Those terrorists called their victims terrorists in order to justify killing and maiming them through well-recorded policies of shoot-to-kill, mass arbitrary arrest, inhumane blockade and the systematic denial of the rights of the Palestinian people. The State of Palestine called on the international community to ensure international protection for the Palestinian people, including Palestinian children, civil society organizations and human rights defenders, until freedom and independence were finally achieved.

82. The State of Palestine was committed to eliminating terrorism in its region and around the world and therefore unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever, by whomever and against whomsoever committed. His delegation stood in solidarity with the victims of terrorism and commended Iraq and Spain for their leadership of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, in which the State of Palestine remained actively engaged. His delegation also welcomed the convening of the High-Level International Conference on Human Rights, Civil Society and Counter-Terrorism.

83. The State of Palestine reaffirmed the need for the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It would continue to advance multilateral efforts and robust international cooperation on countering terrorism, including through its cooperation agreements with more than 80 States. It would also continue to champion an integrated, balanced and accountable implementation of all elements of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which advanced the rule of law rather than justify its breach. His delegation adhered to the goals of the Strategy, which were to protect people, not facilitate attacks against them; respect human dignity and not provide pretexts for its violation; and address – and not perpetuate – the root causes of terrorism in all its manifestations.

84. **Archbishop Caccia** (Observer for the Holy See) said that terrorism undermined the very pillars on which the United Nations had been founded, namely, peace and security, human rights, the rule of law and development. Its immediate victims were often the most vulnerable, including women and children, who were victimized further as terrorism disrupted the economic and social infrastructure necessary for human development. By its nature, terrorism also compromised the perpetrator's own dignity, hopes and ideals.

85. States must respond appropriately to terrorism within the framework of the rule of law. Failing to respect the rule of law when addressing threats could exacerbate radical tendencies in society. An effective response to terrorism required scrupulous adherence to due process and to international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Steps must be taken to ensure that counter-terrorism measures, including international sanctions, did not inhibit the provision of humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid not only relieved the suffering of victims of terrorism, but also provided hope to and upheld the dignity of those who might otherwise fall prey to the terrorists' radicalization and recruitment efforts.

86. The international community must build upon its past efforts to address the economic, political and socioeconomic root causes of terrorism. His delegation supported a whole-of-society approach to countering terrorism that included supporting education, lessening economic disparities, promoting dialogue, advancing poverty reduction measures and promoting the work of local communities and grass-roots programmes. Although extremists often exploited religious identity to promote radical ideologies, authentic religious belief was never at the root of terrorism. Public authorities should therefore engage with religious leaders and faith-based organizations to assist in their counter-terrorism efforts.

87. Indifference to terrorism was not an option. Terrorism was a threat to all. Only through international cooperation could that threat be addressed. His delegation therefore supported the Committee's continuing efforts towards finalizing the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

88. **Mr. Harland** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross) said that terrorism not only violated international humanitarian law but also negated the basic principle of humanity. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) condemned acts of terrorism, whether or not they were committed in the context of armed conflict and irrespective of their perpetrators. While it was legitimate and necessary for

States to take action to ensure their security, counter-terrorism measures could have a negative impact on humanitarian action when the authorities saw such action as a form of prohibited provision of economic resources to listed individuals and entities or treated humanitarian activities authorized under international humanitarian law as a form of prohibited support. Such measures might have unintended consequences, such as impeding impartial humanitarian organizations such as ICRC from tending to the wounded or helping to vaccinate populations against COVID-19. When various forms of contact with listed persons and groups were prohibited outright, ICRC might even be prevented from carrying out humanitarian activities mandated by the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law, such as visiting detained persons or reuniting missing persons with their families.

89. The Security Council had taken a major step forward on Afghanistan with the adoption of its resolution [2615 \(2021\)](#) had established a carve-out for both humanitarian assistance and activities which supported basic human needs in a counter-terrorism-linked sanctions regime. His delegation encouraged Member States to ensure that the carve-out was reflected in their domestic laws. It also encouraged the members of the Security Council to consider following the same approach in other United Nations sanctions regimes, which would be consistent with General Assembly resolution [75/291](#), in which the Assembly had acknowledged the potential negative impacts of counter-terrorism measures on impartial humanitarian action and had urged States to ensure that their counter-terrorism efforts did not impede such action. In recent years, Member States and regional groupings such as the European Union and the African Union had taken measures to better protect humanitarian organizations from the unwanted consequences of counter-terrorism measures.

90. In its counter-terrorism resolutions, the United Nations should continue to emphasize that all counter-terrorism measures be in line with international humanitarian law. Wording based on the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I), which required States bound by the Protocol to allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded humanitarian relief, should be included in counter-terrorism resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Those involved in drafting and implementing counter-terrorism measures should be made aware of the possible unintended consequences of such measures, and both United Nations resolutions and domestic laws

on terrorism should include provisions specifying that sanctions and other restrictions would not apply to exclusively humanitarian activities carried out by impartial humanitarian actors. Future counter-terrorism resolutions should incorporate carefully crafted standard humanitarian exemptions and should require States to adopt concrete and practical measures to ensure that impartial humanitarian organizations were allowed to protect and assist populations in need.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

91. **Mr. Skachkov** (Russian Federation) said that it was disappointing that some delegations had decided to bring entirely unrelated and politicized subjects into the important discussion under the agenda item. The special military operation in Ukraine was being conducted in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The referendums that had taken place had reflected the will of the peoples of the territories, who had exercised their right to self-determination in accordance with the Charter, international covenants on human rights and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States.

92. The statements made on the situation in Ukraine had nothing to do with the true state of affairs. For more than eight years, Kyiv had used methods of war aimed at terrorizing the civilian population, in gross violation of international humanitarian law. During that entire time, the neo-Nazi units and troops of Kyiv, including such hateful groups as Azov and Tornado, had bombed, kidnapped, beaten and raped the residents of Donbas. Western countries and United Nations leadership had turned a blind eye and pretended that that had been perfectly fine. The Minsk arrangements, had been regularly violated with the connivance and incitement of the countries of the collective West.

93. The West had only mentioned international humanitarian law only after the special military operation had begun and had done so selectively, in large part so that it could cause provocation and arrange a staging in order to blame Russia. That had been the case with the staging in Bucha and Izium, in the dramatic theatre of Mariupol, and with the train station in Kramatorsk, which had been hit by Ukrainian rockets. Kyiv was continuing to do whatever it wanted and there had been no reaction to the targeted attacks on civilian persons and facilities, such as the recent shooting by the Ukrainian army of a refugee column that had been waiting to be admitted into territory under Russian control. Once again, dozens of people had been killed and, once again, the West and the United Nations had remained silent. Civilians were currently being killed

not only by Kyiv, but also by weapons supplied by Western countries. The constant flow of weapons to the corrupt Kyiv regime was leading to entirely predictable consequences. There had been an increase in the illicit circulation of such weapons, which were falling into the hands of criminals across Europe and might be used to carry out terrorist attacks around the world.

94. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that the statement delivered by the representative of Azerbaijan had contained the usual set of false narratives, many of which were not related to the agenda item. Armenia rejected all the fabrications of the representative of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan had attempted to attribute to Armenia its wrongdoings, namely, the sponsoring of international terrorism and the utilization of terrorists in the commission of atrocities and other gross violations of human rights. The tactic was clear: by mirroring those accusations, Azerbaijan intended to distract the international community from the reports of international organizations about its responsibility for turning the territory of Azerbaijan into a safe haven for international terrorism.

95. In the absence of evidence of any terrorist entity operating in or sponsored by Armenia, in its official propaganda, Azerbaijani had opted to attribute terrorism to the NGOs and charitable organizations of the Armenian diaspora, many of which had a longer history than the Azerbaijani State itself. Those NGOs and charitable organizations, which operated in countries whose delegations were present in the room, were instrumental in providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to tens of thousands of civilians trapped between the COVID-19 pandemic and the large-scale Azerbaijani aggression of the autumn of 2020, which had been accompanied by despicable war crimes and atrocities. His delegation left it to the distinguished audience in the room to judge for itself the absurdity and ill-mindedness of the allegations of the representative of Azerbaijan.

96. The representative of Azerbaijan had referred to mysterious evidence proving that Armenia had involved foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries in hostilities against Azerbaijan. The real evidence, in fact, was contained in reports of the Governments of Member States and their respective law enforcement agencies, international organizations and independent observers on the ground, and in testimonies obtained during investigations, including from captured terrorists themselves. There were volumes of such evidence, based on official and credible sources, showing the recruitment and transfer by Azerbaijan of foreign terrorist fighters to its territory.

97. Armenia had presented the relevant reports to Member States and United Nations anti-terrorism bodies showing that months before its large-scale aggression, Azerbaijan had initiated the recruitment and deployment of foreign terrorist fighters from conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa. That recruitment had taken place mainly in occupied territory in the Syrian governorates of Idlib, Raqqah and Aleppo. The personal data of the foreign terrorist fighters had revealed that many of them had been engaged in conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Libya and had been integrated into the armed forces and border control forces of Azerbaijan. A private security company, SADAT, had been responsible for the recruitment and logistical arrangements for transportation. The foreign terrorist fighters had been identified as members of such terrorist entities as the Hamzah Division, the Sultan Murad Division, the Sultan Suleyman Shah Division, the Sultan Malik-Shah Brigade and others.

98. The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination had referred to widespread reports that the Government of Azerbaijan had relied on Syrian fighters to shore up and sustain its military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, including on the front line. The fighters had appeared to be motivated primarily by private gain, given the dire economic situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. According to the Working Group, it was even more worrisome that the Syrian fighters deployed to Azerbaijan were allegedly affiliated with armed groups and individuals who, in some cases, had been accused of war crimes and serious human rights abuses during the conflict in Syria, thus seemingly perpetuating a cycle of impunity and risking further violations of international law.

99. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights had documented the deaths of Syrian foreign terrorist fighters and had provided information on their financial incentives. On 4 May 2021, a court in the Syunik region of Armenia had found two captured terrorists guilty of international terrorism, murder and attacks on civilians and had sentenced them to life in prison. During investigations, they had confirmed their involvement in criminal acts, including hostilities for financial compensation, and in military actions by the armed forces of Azerbaijan. They had received an initial three-month military training before being transferred from Syria to Azerbaijan, where they had engaged in the deliberate targeting of the civilian population, with orders to leave no one alive. Moreover, they had been promised that they would receive an additional award of \$100 for each beheaded Armenian. In Azerbaijan, the

extrajudicial execution of an Armenian was not a crime. In addition, the perpetrator would receive a monetary award and be treated as a national hero and an example for young people.

100. The statement that Azerbaijan had been subjected to terrorist attacks in the late 1980s was another self-victimizing piece of cheap propaganda. The reality was that Azerbaijan had recruited thousands of terrorists from the northern Caucasus and Afghanistan in the early 1990s to suppress the fundamental human rights, including the right to self-determination, of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

101. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that the statement of the representative of Armenia was indicative of his country's unwillingness, or inability, to fulfil its international obligations and to advance the peace agenda in the region. Otherwise, the representative of Armenia would not have referred to the so-called aggression by Azerbaijan against a fictitious entity and would not have attempted to mislead the international community through apparent fabrications. The legality of the recourse to force by Azerbaijan was indisputable. Azerbaijan had used a counter-force to restore its territorial integrity and protect its people, acting exclusively on its sovereign soil and in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

102. The allegations of Armenia that the exercise by Azerbaijan of its inherent right and obligation to protect and defend its territory and nationals from aggressors and terrorists was a manifestation of anti-Armenian hatred was preposterous. It was ironic to hear accusations of hatred on ethnic grounds from mono-ethnic Armenia, where the dehumanization of Azerbaijanis was so prevalent that anti-Azerbaijani stereotypes were taught to Armenian children at school from an early age and had expanded into a widely accepted view that Azerbaijanis were ethnically incompatible with Armenians. In addition, there was simply no credible evidence to support the allegations that Azerbaijan was involved in terrorist activities.

103. With respect to the fabricated titles used by Armenia to refer to localities in Azerbaijan, it should be recalled that, after unleashing aggression against his country and occupying and ethnically cleansing its territories in the early 1990s, Armenia had set up, and, over almost three decades, sustained the existence of an illegal entity within those territories. The criminal and racist nature of that entity was self-evident, as it had been established along purely ethnic lines through the unlawful use of force at the cost of tens of thousands of Azerbaijani civilians who had been brutally killed and

hundreds of thousands who had been expelled from their homeland in the course of the aggression. The illegality of that entity had been repeatedly stated at the international level. As a result of the 44-day war that had taken place two years previously, Azerbaijan had put an end to the occupation of its territories and the armed conflict had been resolved.

104. Against that background, the continuing attempts by Armenia to revive the former occupation regime was an encroachment on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of his country and the safety and rights of its people, and an illustration of a deeply rooted hatred that dominated at the State level and within Armenian society. Armenia should be the last State to share knowledge and experience on counter-terrorism or to comment on norms and values which it had consistently opposed.

105. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that the outburst by the representative of Azerbaijan had been unrelated to the topic under discussion and was aimed simply at distracting the Committee from the clear points he had made regarding the reports of international organizations and credible evidence. He would leave unanswered the other points, including those regarding aggression and minorities, because they had been answered in other forums. The representative of Azerbaijan had referred to the peace agenda, but that agenda could not be based on impunity. The representative of Azerbaijan should rest assured that Armenia would ensure that all perpetrators of terrorist acts were held accountable, including their masterminds. Armenia was committed to its international obligations and had accordingly submitted all the relevant information on terrorist crimes to the relevant United Nations entities.

106. The allegations of so-called hatred in Armenia against Azerbaijani citizens were merely the product of the imagination of the representative of Azerbaijan and not was supported by credible reports from any international organization. However, in a recent report, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had referred to worrisome reports that school textbooks in Azerbaijan promoted prejudice and incited racial hatred, in particular against ethnic Armenians. Reports referring to State-led policies of hatred against Armenia and Armenians had also been issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and other international and regional organizations.

107. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that the statements by the delegation of Armenia were yet another striking example of the clear abuse of the United

Nations rostrum and of the democratic procedures for the discussion of its agenda items. The attempts by Armenia to portray itself as an eternal victim could not whitewash the well-known and real image of that country as a persistent violator of international law that supported, promoted and encouraged terrorism at the State level. As Armenia continued to disseminate falsehoods, it was important that the international community insist on accountability for the war unleashed by Armenia and for the tens of thousands of civilians it had killed and thousands of cities, towns and villages it had razed to the ground for the sole purpose of fulfilling unlawful territorial claims based on fabricated historical narratives and racial prejudice.

108. The claim by representative of Armenia that no credible reports attested to his country's policy of racism and hatred was not true. He had also referred to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which, in its concluding observations on the periodic reports of Armenia, had expressed concern at reports of racist hate speech and discriminatory statements in the public discourse, including by public and political figures in the media, in particular on the Internet, mainly against religious minorities, asylum seekers and refugees.

109. The Committee had also expressed concern at the absence of legislation criminalizing racist organizations and participation in them. In its report on Armenia dated 28 June 2016, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance had made note of intolerant statements against Azerbaijanis. In its order on the request for the indication of provisional measures of 7 December 2021, the International Court of Justice had ordered Armenia to take all necessary measures to prevent the incitement and promotion of racial hatred, including by organizations and private persons in its territory, targeted at Azerbaijani nationals or persons of Azerbaijani ethnic origin.

110. Interested delegations were encouraged to familiarize themselves with the information on that subject matter, which was contained in documents circulated by his delegation and which provided compelling evidence attesting to the responsibility of Armenia for terrorist activities and the use of foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries against Azerbaijan.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.