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Chair: Mr. Turbék (Vice-Chair) (Hungary)

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In the absence of Mr. Danon (Israel), Mr. Turbék (Hungary), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 108: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (continued) ([A/71/182](#), [A/71/182/Add.1](#) and [A/71/182/Add.2](#))

1. **Mr. Ahmed** (Sudan) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. The Sudan remained committed to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a comprehensive, sustainable and coordinated manner. It had ratified all international conventions on international terrorism, in addition to African and Arab regional conventions on the subject. The Sudan played an active part in the counter-terrorism strategies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States. At the domestic level, one of its most important actions had been the establishment of a counter-terrorism authority bringing together various ministries and governmental bodies.

2. The national counter-terrorism strategy of the Sudan had been developed in consultation with representatives of civil society, religious leaders and academics and addressed the areas of rule of law, social justice, a culture of dialogue, economic measures, building capacities to combat cybercrime and money-laundering, engagement with civil society, awareness-raising campaigns and curriculum reform. The Sudan had convened a number of international workshops, including a seminar on the role of the Arab media in countering terrorism, which had been held in Khartoum in August 2016.

3. One way of countering terrorism and violent extremism consisted in fighting poverty, achieving balanced and sustainable development and strengthening dialogue between the North and the South. His Government rejected the unilateral measures imposed by certain States, which accused specific countries of sponsoring terrorism for their own political ends. Such measures were counter-productive; they politicized international relations to no end. Terrorism should not be linked to any particular religion, ethnic group or nation. International cooperation was the best way to combat terrorism

while respecting human rights and international law. His delegation accordingly stood ready to participate fully in informal negotiations towards a global comprehensive convention, and hoped to overcome longstanding differences in that regard.

4. **Mr. Medina Mejías** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that foreign occupation and military aggression against sovereign countries and peoples spawned violence, extremism and intolerance. International terrorism was also fuelled by the spread of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, particularly among non-State actors. Joint efforts were needed to promote a negotiated and peaceful political solution to persistent armed conflicts, which undermined international peace and security. Illegal military interventions in Iraq and Libya, in 2003 and 2011 respectively, could not be dissociated from the rise of transnational terrorism. Such interventions, the aim of which had been to overthrow the Governments of sovereign countries, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, had led to the collapse of State institutions and had created the conditions for the emergence, in particular, of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Qaida and Ansar al-Sharia.

5. Territorial fragmentation and chaos were the common fate of States targeted by military aggression, which became a breeding ground for violent extremism, illicit arms trafficking and continuing inflows of huge numbers of foreign terrorist fighters. The impact of the violence unleashed by ISIL had been felt by the civilian population, in particular by ethnic and religious minorities and vulnerable groups such as women and children, whose human rights had been systematically and deliberately violated, in contravention of international humanitarian law and human rights law. The actions of ISIL clearly constituted war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and those responsible must be brought to justice.

6. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had signed and ratified the main international counter-terrorism conventions, at both the global and the regional levels, and complied strictly with the obligations assumed therein. His Government had submitted reports on the required implementation follow-up, had reformed its legislation in order to monitor terrorism financing, chemical weapons and nuclear materials, and had

strengthened its institutional capacity by participating in workshops organized by the United Nations.

7. His delegation strongly condemned the recruitment and use of children to commit terrorist acts and the violations and abuses perpetrated against children by terrorist groups, including through murder and mutilation, kidnapping and rape and other forms of sexual violence. Such acts could be considered war crimes or crimes against humanity. All children accused of unlawful conduct, especially those deprived of their liberty, and child victims or witnesses of offences must retain all their rights and dignity in accordance with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, with a view to their reintegration into society.

8. International cooperation was an essential counter-terrorism tool. In that regard, his Government was still awaiting the extradition of the international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, who was responsible for blowing up a Cubana de Aviación airliner on 6 October 1976, killing 74 innocent civilians.

9. As a uniquely universal body and as the entity responsible for coordinating international counter-terrorism efforts, the United Nations, through the General Assembly, should remain at the centre of the debate on measures to combat international terrorism. His delegation commended the work of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution [51/210](#) of 17 December 1996 and remained committed to continuing negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It called on States to redouble their efforts and to be more flexible in order to achieve that goal. The road towards a truly multi-polar, inclusive, participatory and peaceful world, marked by tolerance, respect and solidarity, lay in ideological, political and economic diversity, within the context of the self-determination of peoples.

10. **Ms. Chartsuwan** (Thailand) said her delegation condemned all forms and manifestations of terrorism and was committed to playing an active role at the national, regional and international levels in efforts to combat and eliminate it. Thailand had been steadily enhancing its domestic legislation to respond to new forms of terrorist threats, in particular by incorporating terrorism as a criminal offence in its Penal Code in 2003 and by promulgating in 2013 the Transnational Organized Crime Act and the Anti-Terrorist Financing

Act. It was also currently developing a Prevention and Suppression of Terrorist Financing and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, in response to Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#).

11. Thailand remained committed to the full implementation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Convention on Counter-Terrorism and continued to intensify its cooperation with ASEAN member States to suppress all forms of terrorism. Her country also attached great importance to international cooperation in that effort: Thailand had ratified nine of the 18 United Nations counter-terrorism instruments and was in the process of becoming a party to the remaining ones, in particular the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Thailand was also an active member of several cooperation frameworks, including the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and stood ready to translate the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy into practice. It welcomed the outcome of the special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, held in Madrid in 2015, which had been followed in her country by the successful holding of subregional workshops on effectively countering terrorism, organized by the Executive Directorate of that Committee.

12. Finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism would contribute significantly to global action to fight terrorism. Her delegation called on States to take additional steps to that end, while reiterating its view that the draft convention should contain a clear and precise definition of terrorism, without reference to “State terrorism”. Furthermore, the root causes of terrorism and radicalization, such as poverty, social marginalization, lack of access to resources and a sense of being treated unjustly, must be addressed. Sustainable and inclusive development, as well as a better understanding among diverse faiths and cultures and an enhanced interfaith partnership, would also help to stem extremism.

13. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia) said that, while nothing could justify terrorist violence, prolonged

conflicts and injustices tended to breed terrorism; it was therefore crucial that the Security Council and all organs of the United Nations system should seek to address its root causes. They could make an essential contribution to that end by working with States in capacity-building, in accordance with their respective needs. The biennial reviews of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy had an important function in that context and her delegation hoped that they would continue to lead to an increasingly more solid and effective cooperation framework.

14. Prevention must be the priority objective. Conscious of the personal and communal motivations sometimes involved in terrorist acts and also of related political, social and economic factors, Indonesia had been working hard to address the root causes of the problem, by strengthening democracy and accommodating the rights of minorities, reducing poverty and combating corruption, in addition to encouraging the political participation of Islamist parties and their cooperation with the ruling parties. Against that background, networks of civil society organizations needed to be built throughout the world to complement the work of Governments.

15. A three-pronged approach of dialogue, empowerment and reintegration in countering terrorism and implementing deradicalization strategies was called for. In the Indonesian system, a dialogue was conducted between convicted terrorists and religious, social and psychological counselling teams, aimed at building trust and helping former terrorists to reintegrate into society. Deradicalization must also go hand in hand with counter-radicalization aimed at providing the public with counter-narratives and involving all important stakeholders.

16. Measures to ensure human rights and fight terrorism were complementary and mutually reinforcing. Mindful of the danger of associating terrorism with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, her Government was accordingly using the Internet to disseminate messages of peace, respect and tolerance and to further develop its counter-terrorism efforts.

17. **Mr. Tiare** (Burkina Faso) said that his country had been a victim of several terrorist attacks since 2014, most recently on 15 January 2016, which had left some 30 people dead. No country was immune from

the phenomenon to which the Sahel-Saharan States were increasingly exposed and which Burkina Faso condemned in all its forms and manifestations. His Government had undertaken a number of legal and institutional reforms aimed at preventing and suppressing terrorism while ensuring respect for human rights. They included a new counter-terrorism law and the establishment and strengthening of specialized judicial and law enforcement services.

18. One of the most effective means of countering the terrorist threat was cross-border cooperation in both judicial and security matters. Because of terrorism's close ties with cross-border crime in that area of the world, it was more necessary than ever to step up such cooperation and prevent the scourge from spreading. Greater attention needed to be given to prevention, particularly in combating violent extremism. His delegation therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to that end, while looking forward with an increasing sense of urgency to the finalization and adoption of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would take into account all aspects of terrorism, including its prevention, funding sources and suppression. The fight against terrorism could only be won through a global initiative and required a concerted international effort to identify and cut off the sources of financing of the worldwide network underpinning it. Appropriate training needed to be provided to all those with a part to play in that fight, but at the same time steps must be taken to tackle the root causes of terrorism, which were poverty, discrimination and the displacement of populations.

19. **Ms. Argüello González** (Nicaragua) said her country firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism, of which Nicaragua, its people and its Government had been victims. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and could not be justified on such grounds.

20. Nicaragua was deeply concerned about the wars being waged under the banner of "war on terrorism", causing deaths, violations of the human rights of millions of people and mass refugee flows. Her delegation wished to express its solidarity with all victims of terrorist attacks, including the hundreds that had occurred over the past year, while noting that, 40 years after the terrorist attack against a Cubana de

Aviación airliner, the perpetrators had still not been brought to justice or extradited. Condemnations of terrorism must go beyond words and be reflected in concrete measures to prosecute, bring to justice and extradite those committing terrorist acts; above all, those who opposed terrorist acts must refrain from supporting or financing such acts by using double standards, referring to groups whose intention was to overthrow legitimately constituted governments as “moderate armed opposition”.

21. Her delegation reaffirmed Nicaragua’s readiness to make every effort to help conclude a convention on terrorism and called on all Member States to demonstrate flexibility towards that end. It also reiterated the importance of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and States’ responsibility to implement it fully and transparently. The world would never be able to be changed for the better without an unwavering commitment to peace and equality among nations and within each society.

22. **Mr. Alshamsi** (United Arab Emirates) said that his region was subject to protracted crises and conflicts and, as a result, had become a hotbed for extremist and terrorist groups. Those groups were seeking to spread hatred and violence among nations, making terrorism a global threat that knew no borders. They had developed methods of financing, recruitment and attack that had brought death and injury to thousands of people, stoked migration crises and destroyed human and cultural heritage. Concerted international efforts were therefore needed to combat terrorism and address its root causes.

23. His Government had placed prevention at the centre of its policies, with a view in particular to preventing extremism from developing into violent extremism. It was also seeking to promote the values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence and respect for cultural diversity within the community, while encouraging the participation of all segments of society, especially young people and women, in the national development process. Moreover, to protect the societies of countries in the region, the lies of extremist and terrorist groups had to be exposed. The United Arab Emirates was accordingly seeking by various means to uphold the true face of Islam, in particular through cooperation with the United States of America. It had become a party to more than 15 regional and

international counter-terrorism conventions and had enacted a number of related laws. It was the right and duty of everyone to combat terrorism; however, such laws as the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act passed by the United States Congress were misguided and could destabilize the strong relationships existing among allies.

24. The United Arab Emirates continued to be active in the fight against terrorism, in particular by participating in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, co-chairing the Global Counterterrorism Forum’s working group on combating violent extremism and coordinating international efforts to protect the cultural and historical heritage from the terrorist groups bent on destroying it. His delegation continued to stress the need to develop a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that would include an international definition of terrorism.

25. **Mr. Eiermann** (Liechtenstein) said that his country condemned all acts of terrorism, irrespective of their motivation, wherever and by whomever committed, and remained committed to the international fight against terrorism in all its aspects, including through cooperation with the United Nations. It had ratified all United Nations counter-terrorism instruments and would continue to promote the effectiveness and legitimacy of terrorism-related sanctions regimes. His delegation called on the Security Council to adopt fair and clear procedures and to apply them to other sanctions regimes, as appropriate.

26. Although they were often no more than an afterthought, measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law must be the basis for the fight against terrorism. Governments actively involved in that fight should beware of contributing to outcomes opposed to the values they were seeking to uphold. Too broad a definition of terrorism could jeopardize the right to freedom of expression and information; mass surveillance could undermine the right to privacy; the legitimate targeting of terrorists by law enforcement and military operations could entail unacceptable risks for innocent civilians. Governments must abide by the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality underpinning both human rights law and international humanitarian law.

27. The United Nations stood at the centre of global efforts to combat terrorism. The respective roles of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat were complementary and mutually reinforcing. The Sixth Committee had also made important contributions, in particular by drafting numerous international conventions in the area of counter-terrorism, notably the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the 2005 Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Somewhat unfairly, it remained better known for what it had not yet achieved, namely, reaching an agreement on a comprehensive convention on counter-terrorism that would fill the gaps between the various sectoral conventions. Following its failed eleventh attempt to fulfil that mandate, the Committee, in the interests of its own credibility, should acknowledge its inability to do so and take the item off its agenda or, if that were not possible, take up the European Union's suggestion and discuss it only every two years.

28. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that her Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomever committed; it could never be justified. Pakistan was one of its principal victims, having lost more than 60,000 lives to it. Her Government nevertheless remained more determined than ever to fight terrorism until it had been completely eliminated from the country. It had accordingly adopted a multi-pronged strategy involving a military-led law enforcement campaign and a comprehensive national action plan that counted as the largest and most effective counter-terrorism operation in the world, with the deployment of 200,000 members of its security forces. The 20-point action plan focused as much on counter-measures as on prevention, as reflected in an all-society approach consisting in the promotion of the rule of law and human rights and the social and political empowerment of youth and women.

29. Notwithstanding such national efforts, terrorism was far from being defeated around the world; it had continued to expand and to morph into more dangerous forms. The international community seemed unable or unwilling to address its root causes and, when it finally focused on prevention, concerned itself mainly with local factors and ignored its transnational dimension.

Concerns about the rule of law as a means of preventing terrorism and violent extremism seemed to prevail only at the national level; yet foreign intervention, foreign occupation and the continued denial of the right of self-determination of people living under foreign occupation were violations of international law as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

30. Prolonged and unresolved conflicts were a further causative factor that the international community had so far been unable to address in the context of preventing violent extremism. Furthermore, while the international community agreed that persistent violations of human rights contributed to violent extremism, the killings continued in Kashmir and Palestine. The oppression of people struggling for the legitimate right of self-determination constituted State terrorism. While there was a global consensus that terrorism could not be associated with any religion, extreme right parties in the West sought with impunity to reap political dividends by espousing Islamophobia.

31. It was therefore not surprising that, in the negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, no agreement had been able to be reached on a precise definition of terrorism. Her delegation was in favour of such a draft instrument being adopted by consensus; its provisions should clearly distinguish between acts of terrorism and the legitimate struggles for self-determination of people living under foreign occupation and should be consistent with international humanitarian law. Pakistan remained fully committed to collaborating with the international community in the collective fight against terrorism; for that fight to be successful, however, it was necessary to identify and address its root causes and the acknowledged drivers of radicalization, namely, social and economic marginalization and exclusion; otherwise, it would focus only on the symptoms but not on the disease.

32. **Mr. Tsymbaliuk** (Ukraine) said that his Government condemned international terrorism unreservedly in all its forms and manifestations and shared the view that the United Nations should play a central role in promoting international cooperation to fight it. Ukraine was a party to all counter-terrorism treaties and was working to that end with the relevant international and regional organizations. Clearly, such

a large-scale threat could be confronted effectively only through joint international and national efforts to disrupt terrorist recruitment and financing schemes, as well as terrorist flows between conflict areas; in addition, the underlying factors must be addressed, in particular prolonged conflicts.

33. Ukraine, like no other country, had since 2014 learned about foreign-grown terrorism from its own tragic experience. A terrorist force roughly 38,000 strong had been put in place in Donbas, largely from the Russian Federation, which had set up recruitment centres and training camps there, and also in occupied Crimea, Rostov and elsewhere. As part of its hybrid war against Ukraine, the Russian Federation also used its State-controlled mass media for the disinformation of its own population, creating a fertile ground for the spread of terrorist propaganda that encouraged its citizens to join the terrorist ranks in Donbas. The sophisticated weaponry at its disposal already exceeded even that acquired by ISIL and continued to grow as the Russian Federation sent more weapons and foreign terrorist fighters to Ukraine through the uncontrolled part of the border between the two countries.

34. For over two years, Ukraine had provided the international community with extensive and irrefutable evidence of the direct involvement of the Russian Federation, its state agencies and its officials in the financing, sponsorship and coordination of terrorist groups, which had committed countless crimes. The Russian Federation had thus, by exporting terrorism to Ukraine, discredited itself as a reliable international player and flouted its obligations under legally binding international counter-terrorism treaties to which it was a party. Moreover, the financing, planning and incitement of terrorist acts was contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and Member States were obliged to bring to justice those who had participated in such acts.

35. His delegation supported the call for the rationalization of the Committee's work under the current item, on the understanding that any decision taken should not affect the continuity of the work of its working group tasked with finalizing the process of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. That should also remain one of the priorities of the General Assembly during its current session.

36. **Ms. Yparraguirre** (Philippines) said that her Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever, by whomever and against whomsoever committed. The Philippines had taken a number of measures to combat terrorism, including the adoption of a global strategy and plan of action, and had also strengthened its engagement with the United Nations system to that end. Her Government had prepared a framework for countering violent extremism through a whole-of-nation approach, which engaged non-traditional government agencies, academia and the private sector as partners in counter-radicalization and deradicalization efforts; it had given special attention to the key role of women and young people in countering terrorism and had organized Muslim leaders and teachers into a national network and force for moderation, peace, democracy and development; it was continuing its grass-roots efforts to raise the security awareness of local communities and was training them to prevent terrorist attacks.

37. In 2015, as Chair of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Philippines had introduced measures to counter foreign terrorist fighters and violent extremism in the work plan of the APEC counter-terrorism working group; in 2017, as Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), it would again make the countering of violent extremism a priority. Within the United Nations system, the Philippines continued to be particularly active in the field of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) mitigation promotion, following the establishment in Manila in 2014 of the CBRN Centre of Excellence.

38. Domestically, a number of legislative measures to uphold national security and support counter-terrorism had been taken in her country, including the Strategic Trade Management Act (2015), which complemented its legal regime against terrorism and extremism showcased by its Human Security Act (2007), in addition to its Anti-Money-Laundering Act and its Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act, both adopted in 2012. Her Government was also continuing to upgrade the skills of its law enforcement and security experts and to further develop their capacities in association with grassroots efforts to detect and prevent insider threats from home-grown violent extremists. Last but not least, earlier in the year, her Government had finalized its National Strategy against

Terrorism, based on the four prongs of prevention, protection, preparedness and responsiveness. The Philippines thus remained committed with its partners in the international community to fighting terrorism and securing for all peoples a safe and peaceful world.

39. **Mr. Hitti** (Lebanon) said that his delegation had repeatedly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and affirmed that its roots were not religious, national or ethnic; it was essentially a form of blind and indiscriminate cruelty. As a constant target of terrorism, Lebanon continued to work incessantly to prevent and counter it, in particular by abiding by all the counter-terrorism conventions to which it was a party and engaging with key actors in efforts to develop a comprehensive national plan to eradicate it. Such a plan would be consistent with international law standards, including the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. On the ground, his country's military and security forces continued, in close collaboration with international partners, to seek to disrupt terrorist networks and fight terrorism.

40. Terrorist groups could no longer be allowed to exploit the root causes of violent extremism and terrorism, such as foreign occupation, marginalization, protracted conflicts, poverty, xenophobia and double standards in the application of international law, which must be seriously addressed. Redoubled efforts were needed for prevention, in particular through the promotion of youth and the empowerment of women, while education must also have a central role by developing tolerance, critical thinking and a culture of dialogue.

41. Lebanon remained committed to the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, while attaching special importance to Pillar I, "Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism", and Pillar IV, "Ensuring human rights and the rule of law". His delegation welcomed the resolution on the fifth review of the Strategy, which reflected its own concerns.

42. Terrorism could not be associated with a specific religion: it was not rooted in Islam. Nor could it be associated with any principles duly recognized under international law, such as the right to self-determination and the right to resist foreign

occupation. The exercise of those legitimate rights could not be assimilated to terrorism, as was done by one particular delegation, which remained strangely silent when terrorist acts were committed by its nationals against civilians living under occupation for almost half a century. The prevailing confusion was a further reminder of the need to develop an explicit and unified definition of terrorism that would be reflected in the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

43. **Mr. Mounsaveng** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), reiterating that his Government condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, said that terrorist acts not only caused the loss of innocent lives but also impeded social and economic development, created a climate of fear and led to injustices. His delegation therefore supported the international community's efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. The Lao People's Democratic Republic had ratified 13 international counter-terrorism conventions and, as well as fulfilling its obligations under those treaties, was actively seeking to meet its obligations under the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. It also played an active role in regional counter-terrorism cooperation frameworks; it was a party to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Convention on Counter-Terrorism and a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering.

44. In cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other international organizations, it had held workshops and seminars to promote awareness of international counter-terrorism conventions among national officials, judges, prosecutors, lawyers and parliamentarians in order to ensure that officials in all branches of Government were aware of their roles and duties in helping to implement those conventions. His Government was also making every effort to combat and prevent transnational crime in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

45. **Mr. Ruiz Blanco** (Colombia) said that his country condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism, which was unacceptable and unjustifiable in any circumstances, could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group.

46. The most serious terrorism-related threat to international peace and security was the spread of violent extremist ideologies and the terrorist groups motivated by them, such as ISIL, Al-Qaida and Boko Haram, which used violent extremism to foment hate throughout the world. Since those groups constantly crossed national borders, the international community must work ever more closely together to prevent their spread and act decisively to reduce their capacity for action.

47. In order for global counter-terrorism efforts to achieve the desired results, all measures to prevent and combat terrorism must be in strict compliance with international law. Attention must be paid to the victims of terrorism and States must establish mechanisms to protect and promote their rights, as a key pillar of efforts to defend and promote human rights. Furthermore, international cooperation should be strengthened in such areas as national institution- and capacity-building, the generation and dissemination of specialized knowledge, the exchange of experiences and good practices, and the establishment of efficient information-sharing mechanisms.

48. The outcome of the seventh ministerial meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum confirmed that the Forum still had a relevant role to play in bringing together capacity, efforts and knowledge acquired in the fight against terrorism. Dialogue, cooperation and joint action were essential foundations for civilized coexistence, free from the scourge of terrorism.

49. After decades of armed conflict, in which terrorism had been used as a combat tactic, his Government had been working tirelessly over the last four years to negotiate a peace agreement that met the country's unique requirements. Although voters had rejected the agreement in a plebiscite held the previous day, Colombia remained committed to negotiations and the pursuit of peace as the means of achieving an inclusive, united society in which challenges were addressed collectively, in accordance with the rule of law and with respect for differences.

50. **Mr. Sareer** (Maldives) said that, while modern innovations and changing political dynamics had led to international integration, they had also enabled the propagation of terrorist threats previously confined to specific countries and regions. Thus, in today's world, terrorism knew no borders. Furthermore, the ideologies

behind terrorist actions had evolved beyond just a political dimension. Maldives was not exempt from the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. With Islam woven into the very fabric of its society, his country could not tolerate the possibility of certain terrorist and violent ideologies distorting the tenets of its peaceful religion for their own ends. It therefore joined the international community in strongly condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It rejected violent extremism and especially denounced all acts of violence carried out in the name of Islam, since they were not only un-Islamic but also anti-Islamic.

51. As a global threat, terrorism required a global solution, which entailed concrete actions at the national, regional and international levels, and cooperation between domestic agencies, States and international institutions. Counter-terrorism strategies at all levels should address the linkages between terrorism, organized crime and financing, and should facilitate capacity-building in relevant fields.

52. At the domestic level, Maldives had implemented a State policy to counter terrorism and violent extremism and had enacted specific counter-terrorism laws. Those instruments complemented international and regional measures, addressing the issues of foreign terrorist fighters and terrorist financing, and providing for broad international cooperation through information sharing, mutual legal assistance and extradition provisions. His Government had also established a National Counter-Terrorism Centre, mandated to coordinate the inter-agency efforts required to combat terrorism effectively at the domestic level and liaise with international security partners.

53. Recognizing the need to address the root causes of terrorism, his Government had revised the national education curriculum, placing an emphasis on the values of moderation and civic responsibility, with a view to raising young people's awareness of the global threat of terrorism. Counter-terrorism awareness programmes focusing on specific sectors, religious scholars and the general public were also being conducted.

54. Domestic efforts alone could not win the fight against terrorism. The international community's cooperation and assistance were paramount, especially for countries that lacked the resources to address the

evolving challenges they faced. Countries such as Maldives, with their unique geographical and societal circumstances, required capacity-building support as well as the sharing of information.

55. Terrorism and violent extremism were without any conceivable logic or rationale. Counter-terrorism measures should not target, marginalize or disadvantage people of any religion, ethnicity or nationality; otherwise, a vicious cycle of increased hostilities and aggression would result, breeding further ideologies conducive to terrorism. A united and comprehensive international effort would provide the strongest possible response to terrorist and violent extremist acts, groups and ideologies.

56. **Mr. Dowdall** (United Kingdom) said that dangerous new trends, such as the continued spread of ISIL and its use of the Internet to recruit and radicalize individuals, the threat posed by those travelling to and returning from Syria and Iraq and the recent attacks by “lone wolf” actors in Europe and elsewhere, meant that the international community’s work to prevent extremism was ever more vital. Governments and societies must adapt their response to the global terrorist threat in order to counter and address the root causes of violent extremism. That would necessitate redoubled efforts and cooperation in national policies, in regional strategies and at the international level, which also required strong leadership from the United Nations. With a view to building on the momentum generated by the fifth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism ([A/70/674](#)), his delegation sought the support of Member States for a proposed joint statement that outlined a number of principles for United Nations global leadership on preventing violent extremism.

57. The United Kingdom welcomed the international attention given to countering the terrorist threat to civil aviation. In view of the clear and ongoing threat to both flights and airports, the unprecedented Security Council resolution proposed by his delegation on that issue had been unanimously adopted on 22 September 2016 (resolution [2309 \(2016\)](#)). He encouraged States to take up the call to action by working together to improve aviation security, including through the International Civil Aviation Organization.

58. His delegation echoed the call made by other Member States for the current agenda item to be considered on a biennial basis, alternating with the General Assembly’s biennial review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in order to avoid possible overlap.

59. **Mr. AlMowaizri** (Kuwait) said that his country rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. 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 the rule of law and respect for human rights; address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty; support good governance, sustainable development and coexistence among religions; ensure respect for religious symbols and holy sites; and prevent incitement to hatred, extremism and violence.

60. Kuwait was a party to most of the international counter-terrorism instruments as well as a number of bilateral agreements. His delegation attached great importance to the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The final text should include a clear definition of terrorism, including State terrorism, and should distinguish it from the right of peoples to resist aggression and struggle for self-determination.

61. In 2013, Kuwait had introduced a law criminalizing money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and establishing a financial intelligence unit. On 24 October 2016, the country would host a meeting of the Counter-ISIL Finance Group. Kuwait denounced the human rights violations and terrorist acts perpetrated by the so-called Islamic State in parts of Iraq and Syria. His country fully supported all international efforts to eradicate terrorist threats around the world.

62. **Mr. Katota** (Zambia) said that his Government had always strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism were criminal, inhuman and unjustifiable. Coordinated efforts and information-sharing by all Member States, in accordance with international law, were needed to combat the global scourge of terrorism, and the common interests of all countries in doing so far outweighed their differences. The United Nations offered the best framework for a sustainable campaign

against terrorism with due regard for the principles of freedom, justice, human dignity and religious tolerance.

63. Zambia remained committed to working with the international community to combat terrorism in all its forms and was pursuing a number of relevant measures, including the reform of national legislation and the implementation of the various counter-terrorism treaties. In 2015, through the adoption of the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, his Government had established the National Counter-Terrorism Centre, which provided policy and administrative framework mechanisms to enable implementation of, inter alia, the provisions of the Act, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001). Zambia had also developed a strong framework for combating money-laundering and terrorist financing, in order to promote financial integrity and make it difficult to conceal illegal activities, and had established a financial intelligence unit responsible for requesting, receiving and analysing suspicious transaction reports, as well as disseminating them to law enforcement agencies and foreign designated authorities.

64. Although the accomplishments of the international community in developing robust counter-terrorism instruments were significant, much remained to be done to ensure that those instruments were widely ratified and put into effect. His Government had initiated the internal approval processes needed to ratify such pending counter-terrorism conventions as the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, and the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

65. While his delegation recognized the work done to date by the relevant working groups, the Committee's failure to finalize the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism was regrettable. Reiterating the importance of concluding such a convention, his delegation encouraged all Member States to cooperate and show flexibility so that the process could be finalized.

66. The fight against terrorism remained a challenge, particularly in developing countries, owing to limited capacity as a result of scarce resources to support the relevant counter-terrorism institutions and mechanisms. His delegation called on the international community to provide technical assistance for enhancing and strengthening such institutions.

67. **Mr. Hasebe** (Japan) said it was vital for the international community to assist countries in strengthening their counter-terrorism capacities since, with terrorist threats spreading all over the world, limitations in such capacity in any one country could easily have global implications. Based on that conviction, his Government supported improved border controls by providing equipment such as fingerprint readers and surveillance cameras, and setting up capacity-building programmes, including seminars for immigration and customs officials. Given the importance of a comprehensive approach, Japan had also sought to address violent extremism conducive to terrorism by supporting efforts to create stronger economies and resilient societies.

68. In particular, Japan would play a leading role in further stabilizing the Asian region and increasing its resilience to terrorism by mobilizing all tools available, including official development assistance. His Government would provide some 45 billion yen in Asia over three years to improve counter-terrorism capacity, promote measures to counter violent extremism and provide social and economic development assistance to create a foundation for moderate society. Over the same period, it would also help to train 2,000 counter-terrorism personnel.

69. The international community should be more united in undertaking measures to prevent and eliminate terrorism. The United Nations played a crucial role in those counter-terrorism efforts. His delegation welcomed the fifth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and especially supported the need for better coordination among relevant actors, including United Nations entities, including by streamlining the existing bodies. Lastly, his delegation attached importance to the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and expected an early conclusion of the negotiation process.

70. **Mr. Townley** (United States of America) said that all terrorist acts, by whomever committed, were criminal, inhumane and unjustifiable, regardless of motivation. His delegation reiterated its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and its commitment to the fight to end it. Joint international efforts were needed to prevent such heinous acts and, in that regard, the United Nations had a critical role to play in mobilizing the international community, building capacity and facilitating technical assistance to Member States in implementation of its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions.

71. A number of Security Council resolutions adopted over the last two years, including resolution 2309 (2016) on terrorist threats to civil aviation; resolution 2253 (2015), which established the fact of being “associated with ISIL” as a new stand-alone listing criterion; and resolution 2178 (2014), which created an important new policy and legal framework for international action in response to the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, provided strong examples of the meaningful role that the United Nations could play in addressing new counter-terrorism challenges. One striking aspect of the Council’s work in that regard was that the whole of government had been mobilized. For instance, resolution 2253 (2015) had been adopted at a Security Council meeting attended by ministers of finance and, in 2015, the Council had reviewed progress in the implementation of resolution 2178 (2014) at a meeting of ministers of the interior. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization had also engaged ministers of education in its projects to prevent violent extremism.

72. Results were being achieved. The flow of foreign terrorist fighters had declined substantially over the last year, owing in large part to the global community’s efforts to implement Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). His Government had information-sharing arrangements with 56 international partners to help identify, track and deter known and suspected terrorists and some 26 partners shared financial information that could provide actionable leads to intercept or prosecute foreign terrorist fighters. At least 31 countries used enhanced traveller screening measures, approximately 60 countries had enacted legislation to prosecute and punish activities relating to foreign terrorist fighters, and at least 50 countries had prosecuted or arrested such fighters or those facilitating their activities. Since

all Member States could learn from each other’s experiences, his delegation would welcome continued exchanges on the subject.

73. His delegation firmly supported the efforts of the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum and other multilateral bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations aimed at developing practical tools to further the United Nations counter-terrorism framework. Continued coordination was needed among the various United Nations entities and external partners such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum and its related initiatives and platforms, which advanced the practical implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through training, capacity-building and grant-making efforts for community-based projects to prevent and counter violent extremism.

74. Despite some challenges during the negotiations, his delegation had been pleased to participate in the fifth review of the Global Strategy, which remained valid and relevant. The four-pillar Strategy, and its emphasis on supporting and promoting the rule of law and respect for human rights, was still the best way to ensure that counter-terrorism was not counter-productive. Of particular note had been the General Assembly’s recognition of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, together with the concrete timeline set for the Assembly to review the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture. His delegation looked forward to that process; however, the resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism to be adopted at the current session should not revisit the discussions held during the Global Strategy review.

75. The Secretary-General’s Plan of Action was an important opportunity for the United Nations system to implement a comprehensive global approach to countering violent extremism, based on the Global Strategy, with all key actors. In that regard, his delegation would support efforts to encourage all Member States to develop national and regional strategies for countering violent extremism. He welcomed the joint statement proposed by the United Kingdom on principles for United Nations global leadership on preventing violent extremism, including its focus on the need to revitalize the United Nations

architecture to meet current threats, and he encouraged other Member States to give it their support.

76. Domestically, the United States was taking a whole-of-government approach to countering violent extremism. A new Inter-Agency Task Force had been established, with four lines of effort focused on engagement, research and analysis, interventions and communications, respectively. In the area of interventions, the Task Force was exploring new multidisciplinary strategies for individuals on a path towards violent extremism, including possible alternative approaches for juveniles and those with mental health problems. However, the lack of existing deradicalization and violent extremism rehabilitation programming in the United States posed a challenge. Those convicted of terrorism-related offences were currently held in prisons throughout the country and received the same types of rehabilitation and re-entry programming as other violent criminals. His delegation looked forward to continued exchanges on those issues as it sought to improve global efforts to counter violent extremism. It was critical to recognize that the common goal of countering terrorism should never be used as an excuse to suppress political dissent. The free flow of information could be part of an effective strategy.

77. All Member States should provide the United Nations system and other relevant actors with sufficient resources to deliver required technical assistance and generate more effective solutions. In that regard, his Government continued to make voluntary contributions to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute for the development of research, assistance and training. It encouraged other Member States to join it in helping to further build the Counter-Terrorism Centre's capacity to provide assistance in the areas addressed by the Global Strategy, including preventing and countering violent extremism, and relevant Security Council resolutions. A growing pool of donors to the Centre could also help coordinate the international community's civilian counter-terrorism assistance based on shared priorities. In addition, Member States should partner with local communities and key civil

society organizations, which were often among the most effective in countering terrorist lies.

78. While the international community had made significant progress in developing a robust legal counter-terrorism regime, much remained to be done. The 18 existing international counter-terrorism instruments would be effective only if they were widely ratified and implemented. His Government was advancing in its own efforts to ratify the more recently concluded instruments. In 2015, it had deposited instruments of ratification or accession, as appropriate, for the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the 2005 Protocols to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation. He urged other States that had not yet done so to follow suit.

79. His delegation remained willing to work with other States to build on and enhance the international counter-terrorism framework and would listen carefully to the statements of other delegations concerning the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The United Nations must send united and unambiguous signals with regard to terrorism, in order to make it unequivocally clear that actors such as ISIL, even if they were engaged in armed conflicts, should be prosecuted as terrorists.

80. **Ms. Samarasinghe** (Sri Lanka), expressing her condolences to the victims of all terrorist attacks and their families, said that all acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever they were committed. Since they constituted an attack on everyone, it was time for all people to show solidarity and unity of purpose in combating terrorism.

81. International networks with linkages to organized crime were a lifeline for terrorist groups, enabling them to propagate their ideologies, raise funds and acquire arms. Groups such as ISIL also continued to deliberately destroy irreplaceable cultural heritage sites. Sri Lanka therefore reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which presented a common strategic and operational framework for combating terrorism and protecting the right to life. In view of the many challenges

encountered as a result of the changing face of terrorism and violent extremism, including through the rapid advancement of technology, porous borders and large movements of persons fleeing violence, it was important to seek new and innovative ways to counter the growing threat. Terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism were not exclusive to any one country or region but spread across national borders, thereby challenging existing boundaries and threatening the very fabric of the principle of sovereign States on which the international legal order was based.

82. The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters was a matter of grave concern. With tens of thousands of such fighters from over 100 States, it was vital to harness global support and respond more aggressively to those threats. However, while terrorists dehumanized their victims, the international community should never abandon its own common humanity, which gave it strength in the fight against terrorism. At the same time, terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

83. In many parts of the world, violent extremism targeted vulnerable and marginalized communities, children, minorities, and women and girls. United Nations entities that dealt with those specific groups must therefore be fully engaged in the Organization's counter-terrorism work. While every effort must be made to prevent refugee and asylum status from being abused for the purposes of perpetrating terrorist attacks, the international community should not fail to protect the poor, weak and marginalized. Member States must continue to fulfil all their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.

84. Sri Lanka was a party to 13 international counter-terrorism conventions and the Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. It remained an active participant in global efforts to counter the illegal movement of funds for terrorist purposes and would continue to support the work of the General Assembly and the Security Council in coordinating counter-terrorism efforts and establishing legal norms. It

appreciated the work of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 in strengthening the international legal framework against terrorism. In that regard, her delegation stressed the importance of finalizing negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, recalling that the conclusion of such a convention was one of the key components of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

85. To that end, it urged Member States to overcome outstanding differences without delay. It was imperative to send a clear message on the international community's resolve to combat terrorism, and the seventy-first session of the General Assembly must be seen as an ideal opportunity for Member States to demonstrate the political will needed to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion. As a country that had eradicated terrorism from its soil following a violent and tragic era lasting nearly three decades, Sri Lanka attached great importance to international cooperation on efforts to combat terrorism. It looked forward to a more constructive dialogue with all countries and would continue to work tirelessly to counter that scourge.

86. **Mr. Musikhin** (Russian Federation) said that it was clear from recent events that the activities of terrorist organizations now posed a truly universal threat to international peace and security. The recent review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy had confirmed that the Strategy remained vital to international counter-terrorism efforts. Its particular significance was that it represented a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism, in which military force and law enforcement measures were accompanied by system-wide efforts to prevent terrorism and address the conditions conducive to its spread. During the review, and in various other forums, his delegation had consistently advocated broadening and enhancing the effectiveness of international cooperation in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, with the United Nations as the central coordinator. In that regard, full implementation in good faith of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions by all States was the guarantee of success.

87. Regrettably, however, international counter-terrorism cooperation was still characterized by double

standards and politicization, with distinctions being made between “bad” and “not entirely bad” terrorists and extremists. Terrorist groups were being used in various kinds of geopolitical schemes, a trend whose dangers had been noted by the Secretary-General in his most recent report on activities of the United Nations system in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/70/826). Such tolerance for terrorists, or their use for temporary gains, was at the root of the crisis in the Middle East and North Africa, leading to the unprecedented rise of terrorist groups such as ISIL and the Nusrah Front, and was the reason why it had not been possible to completely eradicate the terrorists operating in Syria. Against that backdrop, he recalled that the General Assembly had urged Member States to ensure no tolerance for terrorism, regardless of the targets or motives (resolution 70/291, para. 34).

88. The presence of foreign terrorist fighters posed a growing threat, particularly when they returned from conflict areas with military experience and links with terrorist networks that would subsequently enable them to carry out subversive activities in their home countries. Measures to combat that threat called for a system-wide approach, with enhanced cooperation between special services and law enforcement authorities, border and customs authorities, immigration services and financial intelligence units, as well as improved mechanisms for legal cooperation in criminal matters and greater exchange of information and tracking of fighters’ movements.

89. Efforts to counter the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters also entailed new tasks in relation to preventing the expansion of terrorist ideologies. Terrorists were still using the Internet successfully to disseminate their ideas, recruit new fighters and prepare acts of terrorism. Noting that the review of the Global Strategy had stressed the need to address the threat posed by narratives used by terrorists (resolution 70/291, para. 43), he said that his delegation had prepared a draft resolution of the Security Council aimed at countering the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology. He trusted that it would be supported.

90. In recent years, greater attention had been paid to the need to prevent violent extremism. At the same time, States were at odds with each other on how to define that concept and how to address the issue, which

had resulted in an absence of consensus regarding the content of the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The General Assembly, in its review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, had clearly distinguished between the relevant concepts and had made the prevention of violent extremism subsidiary to counter-terrorism efforts. The balance inherent in the Global Strategy had been preserved; it could thus be seen as a universal platform for effectively countering terrorism. His delegation supported the fundamental provision that the principal responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy lay with Member States. Caution was advisable in considering any possible reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture, since it was crucial to maintain the balance of power between the Security Council and the General Assembly. The prevention of violent extremism should be of secondary importance in the mandates of counter-terrorism bodies.

91. His delegation supported the efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force concerning implementation of the Global Strategy and noted that it was paying greater attention to ensuring counter-terrorism protection for States in Central Asia. In that regard, the Russian Federation actively participated in such regional bodies as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which had consistently taken measures to improve the legal basis of the fight against terrorism and to harmonize legislation.

92. It would be possible to ensure effective counter-terrorism cooperation only if the international legal basis for such cooperation was strengthened. As stated by other delegations, there was therefore a need to expand the number of parties to international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols. An important signal in that regard could be provided by reaching an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. His delegation would continue to contribute to the search for compromise solutions.

93. With regard to the statement delivered by Ukraine at the current meeting, his delegation had already responded to those assertions in its earlier comments to the Security Council and the General Assembly.

94. **Mr. Waweru** (Kenya) said that, while the Charter of the United Nations largely envisaged an international security system in which the Organization intervened in conflicts between — not within — Member States, nearly all the deadliest international conflicts with which the United Nations was now grappling had violent extremist or terrorist movements such as ISIL, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida as protagonists, and were thus difficult to end. Throughout the world, the fanatical ideologies and savage violence of extremists and terrorists threatened democracy, constitutional rule and economic development. Such groups, which rejected the principles of pluralism, equality, respect for the rights of women and freedom of religion, had exploited conflicts, the attendant collapse of States, and geopolitical disorder in order to thrive. Using new technologies such as the Internet to recruit and to gain new footholds, particularly in Africa and Europe, they had committed unspeakable atrocities and murdered tens of thousands of innocent people on every continent. No country was immune and all people were affected, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, wealth or lack thereof.

95. One explanation for the spread of such groups, despite the existence of the four-pillared United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and a collection of relevant Security Council resolutions, was that many terrorist movements were successfully exploiting religion through a selective reading of religious texts and histories to justify terrorist violence and achieve political ends, while the international community continued to react to the challenge with traditional law and order tools. Conventional means of security, although important in protecting citizens and States, were insufficient to combat the insidious spread of terrorist ideologies. Countering terrorist narratives was thus an important measure complementing other initiatives to prevent the spread of violent extremism; however, such counter-narratives must be real, inclusive, non-rhetorical and adaptable to various local contexts. The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which advised the adoption of inclusive approaches to address, inter alia, the socioeconomic circumstances that fed violent extremist narratives and ideologies, held the basis for unified international action against violent extremism, particularly if Member States also developed their own national plans of action.

96. In response to the growing terrorist threat, his Government had launched an unprecedented, multi-agency security operation and had invested in technology, skill-building activities and the development of new counter-terrorism approaches. It was adding prevention and counter-radicalization strategies to its more traditional security approaches and had recently launched a National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, based on the need to foster a global rejection of extremist ideologies hostile to its nationhood and way of life, as well as to promote narratives that minimized sympathy for terrorism as a means of changing society or politics. That Strategy, which would involve all sections of Government, communities, civil society, the private sector and international partners, was aligned with the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Among other crucial tasks, it provided for the disengagement and rehabilitation of returning foreign terrorist fighters who completely rejected the use of violence and any adherence to the ideology and aims of terrorist groups.

97. In order to ensure the success of any strategy to counter extremist ideology and the terrorism driven by it, conflicts must be prevented and resolved, since counter-narratives could not succeed if communities were still engaged in open hostilities. The prevention and resolution of conflict through peaceful means, including dialogue and mediation, must always remain the preferred course of action. Moreover, at the regional and international levels, political solutions must take precedence over militarized approaches. Coordination should also be improved at the national, regional and international levels, through the timely sharing of information and best practices.

98. Efforts to counter extremist and terrorist narratives should be nationally owned and led by the Government as the main legitimate authority in each country and the focal point for resource mobilization, coordination, and collaboration with regional Governments in developing joint counter-narrative communication plans. The coordination of partnerships between public and private actors, in particular civil society organizations, was crucial for successful counter-messaging efforts. Investments in deradicalization and reintegration were also vital, since the forgiveness and rehabilitation of violent extremists

was perhaps the most powerful and sustainable counter-narrative, particularly for young people. That would entail engaging with faith-based communities and supporting and encouraging families and society to accept reformed extremists.

99. Governments should formulate inclusive policies to address the socioeconomic and political drivers of violent extremist narratives. Timely communication of the formulation and implementation of such policies was crucial for promoting national ownership and eliciting feedback on gaps in execution at each stage. Furthermore, all efforts, whether local, regional or international, must be properly resourced. Although such measures as educational programmes, early warning systems and rehabilitation were costly and required huge efforts to execute, they were necessary in order to defend the values of the international community.

100. **Ms. Petros** (Eritrea) said that new terrorist attacks were occurring regularly all around the world — sometimes in regions and countries already suffering difficult circumstances — and a frightening number of innocent people were being killed and wounded. Such attacks posed a major challenge to development. Young people in particular were being lured to join extremist groups, often under the illusion that they would be part of a greater cause. In view of the transnational nature of the threat, her Government was in favour of regional cooperation to combat terrorism and violent extremism; in particular, the countries affected must be supported in their efforts to address terrorist crimes. The root causes of terrorism should also be examined. In that connection, the unjustified inclusion of certain countries on the list of State sponsors of terrorism was counter-productive and undermined cooperation.

101. Eritrea had undertaken a number of counter-terrorism measures, including the publication of its new Penal Code and the enactment of an Anti-Money-Laundering and Terrorist Financing Proclamation. A two-day workshop on combating money-laundering and terrorist financing had recently been held in Asmara in partnership with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. Eritrea also participated actively in regional and international conferences on countering terrorism and violent extremism, and it was a party to the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of

Terrorism and other relevant regional conventions, including the Community of Sahel-Saharan States Convention on Mutual Assistance in Security Matters. It supported unreservedly and contributed to the counter-terrorism alliance led by Saudi Arabia.

102. Eritrea was located in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region, where, over the last two decades, terrorism and violent extremism had claimed many lives, destabilized countries and led to foreign intervention. That situation posed a real threat to the peace and security of the entire region and directly affected her country's security and economic development. Despite the challenges, Eritrea had been able to establish a harmonious nation in which Christians and Muslims, and nine different ethnic groups, lived side by side. Her Government was fully committed to implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions to protect its sovereignty and territorial waters. It was of paramount importance for the Security Council to lift the unjust sanctions imposed on her country unconditionally and immediately so that Eritrea could contribute further to the fight against terrorism and extremism.

103. **Ms. Quiel Murcia** (Panama) said that her delegation welcomed the fifth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and underscored the importance of its four pillars, especially in relation to building States' capacity, the role of the United Nations and prevention. While it acknowledged that the current international system was not perfect, Panama had reaffirmed in all regional and global forums its strong commitment to confronting and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in strict compliance with the norms and principles of international law, including international norms on the protection of human rights, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the rule of law. Panama had ratified 18 international counter-terrorism conventions, had harmonized and updated its legal regulations and had strengthened international cooperation to prevent, suppress, combat and punish acts of terrorism and all forms of terrorist financing. Terrorism had been criminalized in the Panamanian criminal justice system since 2003, while in 2013 new provisions had been added to the Penal Code regarding common aggravating circumstances in relation to terrorism.

104. In 2011, Panama had established the Coordination Council Against International Terrorism, with the aim of reviewing compliance with international counter-terrorism conventions and their protocols, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions. In view of its global responsibilities and to promote peace and human rights, Panama had also expressed its support for international efforts to counter the financing of terrorism and, in 2015, had added provisions imposing 20- to 30-year prison terms for crimes in connection with terrorist financing.

105. Panama had a comprehensive domestic regulatory and supervisory regime for banks, financial institutions and other activities deemed particularly susceptible to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, and it had taken measures to prevent money-laundering, establishing specific regulations for the preventive freezing of assets and adding new reporting entities that were required to submit reports on unusual or suspicious transactions to the national financial intelligence unit. As Chair of the OAS Inter-American Committee against Terrorism in 2017, Panama intended to continue its constructive and cooperative work to combat terrorism, with a particular focus on national financial systems, international cooperation and exchange of information for the prevention of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

106. In the area of international cooperation, Panama, as a bioceanic country, had taken part in the Global Container Control Programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Customs Organization, in order to facilitate the sharing of information with other countries' customs authorities, the issuance of international alerts and the conduct of joint operations. Panama was also to host a regional conference, with the participation of a number of other Central American countries and the Dominican Republic, to raise awareness and strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect and address the threat of nuclear terrorism.

107. Her Government reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism and condemned all acts of terrorism, regardless of their origins, perpetrators, motivations and manifestations. In that regard, it wished to reiterate the importance of taking measures, under the auspices of the United Nations, to conclude a

universal and comprehensive legal instrument on international terrorism that addressed current realities.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.