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Statement by

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The United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy

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Thank you Mr. President,

Allow me thank you for convening this Debate on this important issue. I would also like to express our appreciation for the hard work of your Office that allowed this resolution to pass by consensus, which Israel joined.

Mr. President,

When our children are not safe in their schools and our families are not safe in their homes, then we – as an international community - have failed. We have failed to stand up to terrorism, failed to resist those who spread hatred, and failed to fight back against the plague that threatens to overrun entire nations.

No country is safe today, and no continent is immune from the horrific consequences.

Today violent extremist ideologies drive the most brutal and violent terror attacks we have witnessed. The numbers of people killed in Syria are unimaginable, and the stories being told by refugees fleeing the cruel hands of the Assad regime and the barbaric ISIS attacks, shock the conscience of human kind. At the same time, the flow of foreign fighters joining these terror organizations remains strong, with more fighters joining every day.

When analyzing the issue of violent extremism, we often hear that poverty, unemployment, and marginalization drive people to become terrorists. These are indeed core factors.

But we must not ignore the fact that some terrorists also come from prosperous families, live in countries with open and equitable societies, and enjoy the full benefits of a university education.

So while social and economic factors are important considerations, we must not delude ourselves. Young people from all walks of life and in all environments are being drawn to violent extremism. If we are not clear about what drives it, we will not be able to overcome it.

And here we must be clear - the real and most basic threat we face is the extremist ideology itself.

Thus, if we truly want to defeat violent extremism and terrorism, we must attack radical extremist ideology at its source. It is the ideological core which spurs terrorism, emboldens its sponsors, and motivates terrorist recruitment, operation, and growth.

Today we acknowledge that a prime driving forces behind the ideology of violent extremism is incitement and indoctrination.

We see young children being brainwashed - persuaded by manipulative leaders towards a life of extremism that sanctifies death instead of life.

Countering incitement and radicalization is one of the most effective tools at our disposal. We must promote education that teaches peace instead of hate, tolerance instead of violence, and mutual understanding instead of martyrdom.

Community leaders and cultural, religious and political figures, play a crucial role in promoting these counter-radicalization efforts.

We must make every effort to ensure that these key voices of moderation are heard, and that they defeat the forces of extremism.

Mr. President,

Unfortunately, In Israel the threat of terrorism is all too real. For decades, Israel has been at the forefront of confronting terror and radical ideology. Over the course of the past few months alone, 30 Israelis have been killed by terrorists, and over 300 have been injured in hundreds of attacks.

Israel has long understood that in order to Counter terrorism, we also have to counter Violent Extremism, and this is an integral component of our national counter-terrorism strategy.

We have supported organizations that build bridges between citizens of different religions and beliefs through educational, cross-cultural and interfaith meetings. We believe that tolerance and understanding the other are the best way to defeat extremism and radicalism.

Mr. President,

Israel welcomes the Secretary General's Plan of Action. It is Israel's strong conviction that only a unified and proactive stance will enable us to get ahead of the phenomenon of violent extremism, to mitigate the next wave of foreign terrorist fighters recruits and prevent the horror attacks of tomorrow.

At the same time, the implementation of the plan must be done in concert with, and not in place of, our ongoing counterterrorism measures.

Mr. President,

Our final point is that just as violent extremism knows no boundaries, so too, our efforts to prevent it must be united.

We must not allow excuses for terror – “no ifs ands or buts” – terror is terror is terror.

The Secretary-General's plan offers opportunity for cooperation but we must avoid detracting from its promise. Some in this chamber seek to infuse politicization into this discussion - - but this background noise must not be allowed to hijack this important topic.

The goal of countering terrorism is simply too important. Now more than ever, as violent extremism tears our world apart, it is imperative that we stand together.

Mr. President,

The State of Israel stands ready and willing to play an active role in the crucial endeavor of preventing violent extremism.

Thanks you.