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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT
BY
MINISTER COUNSELLOR S MAQUNGO,
SOUTH AFRICAN PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UN**

**DURING
CONSIDERATION IN THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF
AGENDA ITEM 108: "MEASURES TO ELIMINATE
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM"**

**NEW YORK
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Mr Chairman,

May I take the opportunity to join other delegations in congratulating you on assuming your position. We are confident that under your wise stewardship this committee will make progress in completing the work set out for this session and my delegation pledges its support and cooperation to you in this regard.

From the outset, my delegation wishes to align itself with the statements made by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Africa Group on the subject of measures to eliminate international terrorism. During the past few months we have witnessed various incidents of terrorism in North Africa and other parts of the world. Not only are innocent people being killed and maimed, also vital infrastructure is being destroyed. This subject continues to demand serious consideration. We need to move from words to concrete action.

Terrorism, in line with the Algiers Convention on Terrorism, cannot be justified under any circumstances. Political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other motives cannot be a justifiable defence against a terrorist act. However, there is a difference between terrorism and legitimate struggle waged by peoples for their liberation or self-determination in accordance with the principles of international law.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted during the 61st Session is a positive step in the right direction, but it is not a panacea in itself. It is a framework for implementation on a global level giving general guidance to member states on the main elements of a counter-terrorism strategy. Responsibility for implementation still lies with the UN and member states. Despite the good work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), much still needs to be done to inform member states of the Strategy and what it entails. We welcome the initiatives by various governments to hold workshops and symposia as part of efforts to clarify the Strategy as the CTITF would not be able to do this on its own. The mid-term review of the Strategy planned for later this year should be used as an opportunity not only to look back, but also identify milestones for the coming year.

The various initiatives taken by governments and regions to combat the global threat that terrorism presents is evidence of the commitment of the international community to fight terrorism. However, it is also true that many developing countries, including those in Africa face competing and immediate threats and challenges arising from social development issues such as poverty, conflict and disease. It is therefore encouraging that the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy recognizes that the factors conducive to the spread of terrorism must be addressed. It is the view of my delegation that terrorism cannot be addressed militarily and therefore addressing factors conducive to the

spread of terrorism is particularly important as part of a holistic strategy to combat terrorism.

Mr Chairman,

There is a need to conclude a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism. A great deal of progress has been made, but there are still important outstanding issues that have to be resolved. In our efforts to combat international terrorism our efforts should not be focussed on the manifestations of the problem as this will merely address the symptoms and the causes – whatever these may be. It is important that we delve deeper and address the definition of terrorism and its causes. It is only then that we will be able to embark on countering efforts are sustainable.

My delegation would be amiss if we were not to express ourselves on the need to respect international law, in particular international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law while implementing measures to eliminate international terrorism. Assassinations, target killings, kidnapping, indefinite detention without trial, torture and mass punishment cannot be justified under any circumstances. If states employ measures similar to those of terrorists, what distinguishes them from the terrorists themselves?

Much needs to be done and my delegation reaffirms its support for efforts by this body to eliminate international terrorism.

I thank you.