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Statement by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group on the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Protection of Human Rights while Countering Terrorism and the Special Rapporteur on Torture

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the African Group.

We thank the two special rapporteurs, Messrs Martin Scheinin and Juan E. Méndez for the presentation of their reports.

On the report of the Special Rapporteur on Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while countering terrorism, the African Group notes that the report largely focuses on the compilation of 10 areas of best practices for countering terrorism. We consider this endeavour as very useful and beneficial in our discussion on this subject. It is particularly heartening to note that there are a number of valuable elements contained in the compilation from which states could draw inspiration and consider developing in the future. However, some of the elements may require some more reflection and further refinement.

The African Group welcomes and fully shares the view expressed by the Special Rapporteur that when states, in their effort to counter terrorism, violate international law on exceptional circumstances, it is imperative for them to ensure that such is not based on discrimination exclusively on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin. We also concur with the Special Rapporteur that people arrested or detained on suspicion of terrorism must have access to legal assistance of their choice and must be informed of that right.

We also note the efforts made by the Special Rapporteur to give a fashion out a model definition of terrorism. While appreciating that effort, the African Group believes that a more comprehensive definition of this concept should worked with all concerned, given that terrorism is a common threat to all states.

Mr. President,

Now turning to the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the African Group expresses concern on the prevalence of the practice of torture and we share the Special Rapporteur's view that, given the brutality of this form of punishment,

there is a need for all concerned parties to work out quick and effective means to address this issue.

On the role played by forensic and other sciences in eradicating the use of torture, the African Group welcomes the observations of the special rapporteur in this regard and supports his call to states to continue working with the relevant international organizations to ensure capacity building and technology transfer in this field.

I thank you