

Algeria



الجزائر

Permanent Mission of Algeria
to the United Nations
New York

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Statement

On behalf of the African Group

by

Ambassador Mohammed BESSEDIK

Deputy Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations

Before the Sixth Committee

72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly

Under Agenda Item 109

“Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism”

New York, 2 October 2017

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your deserving election. Allow me to assure you of the African group's fullest cooperation and support throughout the work of the Committee.

The African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

African States strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever, by whomever, against whomever for no cause or grievance can terrorism be justified.

The African Group takes note of the Secretary-General's report on measures to eliminate international terrorism. The African Group values the sincere engagement of the Secretary-General for a successful review of the UN counter terrorism architecture and welcomes the establishment of the Office for counter terrorism. We seize this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov on his appointment as head of this Office and encourage him to work closely with the African Union Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, who serves also as the Director of the African Center for Study and Research on Terrorism.

The African Group renews its support to the ad hoc committee to fulfill its mandate in drafting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We reiterate the importance of the conclusion of a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism and the continued effort for that end. We further call upon all states to cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. The comprehensive convention on international terrorism should, in no way deny people their right to self-determination and should abide by the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

The African Group reiterates its willingness to work actively with other delegations to continuously refine the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy as well as to achieve consensus regarding the draft comprehensive Convention on international terrorism. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should be given serious consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

Africa has long recognized the need to embark on concrete measures to counter the phenomenon of terrorism. In this respect, the African Union is actively engaged in the fight against terrorism

and violent extremism. Over the years, AU has developed a rich normative framework to counter terrorism.

We have established African Center for Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) in Algiers (Algeria) to serve as a structure for centralizing information, studies and analyses on terrorism and terrorist groups and to develop Counter-Terrorism capacity building programmes. The ACSRT also provides a forum for interaction and cooperation among Member States and Regional Mechanisms.

The Centre plays an important role in guiding the AU's counter-terrorism efforts and works in collaboration with a number of regional and international partners to ensure coherent and coordinated counter-terrorism efforts in the continent.

We also have undertaken numerous capacity building initiatives, to enhance the capacity of AU Member States to address the scourge of terrorism. AU has also encouraged the development of regional processes to facilitate the exchange of intelligence among concerned countries. The Nouakchott Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan region is one of such processes.

The continent has made tremendous efforts to meet the objective of eradicating terrorism and few among the numerous steps realized in that regard, is the efforts of AMISOM, which have actively responded to these challenges in a regional, multidimensional approach to fight terrorism. In addition, over the past few years, all Africa's subregions and the continent as a whole have undertaken commendable efforts towards putting in place joint decision - making and operational mechanisms to combat crime, terrorism and piracy.

The commitment of the African Union was further demonstrated by the holding special summits of Peace and Security Council dedicated to terrorism and violent extremism

Mr. Chairman,

We know that to sustainably respond to the problem of violent extremism and terrorism, we need to effectively address conditions conducive to terrorism. At its Nairobi Summit, the Peace and Security Council emphasized the need to address all conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism and the importance of comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies empowering civil society organizations, including religious leaders and women, as well as vulnerable groups, and covering not only security and law enforcement, but also poverty eradication, job creation and development.

The African Union, to further contribute to countering extremism is working with Member States, with the support of various stakeholders, to design, develop and implement interventions

that aim to address the different aspects of the problem, including counter and de-radicalization programs.

This Plan of Action includes practical counter-terrorism measures that substantially address Africa's security challenges, including measures in areas such as police and border control, legislative and judicial measures, financing of terrorism and exchange of information.

On the legal front, I would like to refer to the adoption by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) of the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, during its 35th Ordinary Summit, held in Algiers, in July 1999. To mention some of its provisions, the Convention requires that States Parties criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws as defined in the Convention. It also defines areas of cooperation among states, establishes state jurisdiction over terrorist acts, and provides a legal framework for extradition as well as extra-territorial investigations and mutual legal assistance. The Convention entered into force in December 2002.

In the same vein and aiming to define practical measures to ensure effective implementation of the Convention, the AU High-Level Inter-Governmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, held in Algiers in September 2002, adopted the AU Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

During its 17th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Malabo (Equatorial Guinea), in July 2011, African Heads of State and Government adopted the African Model Law on Counter Terrorism, developed by the AU Commission aimed to assist Member States in strengthening and/or updating their national legislation.

This demonstrates the international and regional commitment by African Member States to address terrorism, in particular given that a number of African States throughout the continent suffer of this scourge.

Mr. Chairman,

While expressing worry about the increase in incidences of kidnapping and hostage-taking with the aim of raising funds or gaining political concessions, the African Group considers that the financing of terrorism is a matter of grave concern for the international community and equally concerned that the payment of ransoms to terrorist groups constitutes one of the main sources of financing of terrorism. In this regard, the African Group urges the member States to cooperate in addressing the issue of the payment of ransoms claimed by terrorist groups.

Apart from implementing concrete measures, more attention in the fight against terrorism needs to be paid to the further strengthening of inter-state cooperation. States should expand the range of assistance available in the apprehension of terrorists and in the investigation and prevention of

terrorist acts. In this vein, the African Group welcomes the initiatives to encourage cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in the fight against terrorism.

We appreciate the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) elaborated by the African Center for study and Research on Terrorism and the United States' Africa Center for Strategic Studies. We also welcome the Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on combating terrorism in West and Central Africa. All these initiatives are important ways of strengthening the capacity of African countries to adopt coordinated approaches on countering terror.

Mr. Chairman,

Measures aimed at ensuring the more effective implementation of counter-terrorism conventions and related UN resolutions, as well as capacity-building in developing countries are vital for a well-functioning universal international law approach to combating terrorism. Africa always endeavors to live up to its international obligations in the fight against terror and in the implementation of related UN resolutions. However, many of African States are hamstrung by inadequate resources and weak capacity and therefore appeal to the international community for the requisite assistance to enable them to fulfill their obligations and commitments.

Mr. Chairman,

To conclude, while the African Union is committed to fully shouldering its share of responsibility in the fight against terrorism, we should be mindful of the fact that conditions that provide a fertile ground for terrorism and violent extremism have to be addressed globally. Let us all contribute to a more peaceful and just world, as this will go a long way in delegitimizing the terrorists' narrative.

I thank you for your attention.