



**Statement  
on behalf of the  
Republic of South Africa  
by  
Thabo Molefe  
Legal Counsellor, South African Permanent Mission  
before the Sixth Committee of the  
73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
under Agenda Item  
“Measures to eliminate international terrorism”  
New York, 3 October 2018**

Chair

Allow me to thank you for affording us the floor. South Africa wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your election and to assure you of South Africa's full support for the work of the Committee at this session. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this topic.

At the outset, let me associate myself with the statements delivered by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and The Gambia speaking on behalf of the African Group.

Chair

South Africa believes that there can be no justification for terrorism whatsoever. We, therefore, strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as all acts, methods and practices of terrorism.

Whilst much is being done to counter terrorism at the international, regional, sub-regional, bilateral and national levels, including in terms of law enforcement, mutual legal assistance and extradition, it has become critically important and urgent to conclude a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism. We, therefore, welcome the work of the *ad hoc* committee tasked with drafting the convention. In light of the prevalence of terrorism today and the evolution of the threat, it has become urgent to reach agreement on the outstanding issues in the negotiations on the convention. We are, therefore, ready to work constructively with Member States in the working group and we hope that we can make the necessary progress during this session towards finalising the convention. We encourage other Member States to also approach the work of the working group with the same spirit of constructiveness and compromise.

We believe that in order for the convention to be effective in eliminating international terrorism, it should not conflate the issue of terrorism with peoples' legitimate aspirations for self-determination and struggles against colonial domination in a manner that is in accordance with international law.

Equally important for the convention, as well as all other initiatives aimed at countering terrorism, remains respect for human rights, particularly the right to life, the right not to be arbitrarily deprived of freedom, the right not to be detained without trial, not to be tortured, not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way, the right of access to courts, as well as universally accepted rights of arrested, detained and accused persons. The human rights of victims of terrorism should equally find expression in our work on this topic.

We also believe that, in order to be effective, the comprehensive convention should address the underlying conditions conducive to terrorism. Its causes and manifestations are varied and should be taken into account when elaborating counter measures, which should be in accordance with international law. Measures implemented should not result in marginalisation and the subsequent sense of alienation that exacerbates extremism, which often leads to further recruitment of terrorists.

With regard to 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, we support the convening of such a conference and believe that it could be an opportunity to mobilise momentum for the finalisation of a comprehensive convention.

Chair

Finally, we wish to stress the importance of support and capacity-building to developing countries to implement global initiatives to combat terrorism. Developing countries are most vulnerable to terrorist attacks, whilst also being least resourced to address terrorism, both in terms of prevention and the prosecution of perpetrators of terrorist acts.

We hope that our deliberations will be fruitful and will yield tangible results that display our shared commitment to working towards practical cooperation to successfully counter the scourge of terrorism.

Thank you.